



CUTENESS OVERLOAD! MAKE INCREDIBLE DOG PORTRAITS • EXPLORING THE DEEP SEAS IN B&W

October 2015 • Rs. 150
(Total 164 pages)

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INSIDE
AN EXCLUSIVE MAGAZINE ON THE ART OF
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João Bernardino on his love
for deserted urbanscapes

SPECIAL PREVIEW

First ever photo festival in
Hyderabad: what to expect

VISUAL MUSINGS

Dinesh Khanna on legacies
built by inspiring individuals

PROFILE

Fascinating tales from the
wild by Rathika Ramasamy

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EDITORIAL

**I should have left
this page blank,
for once.**



An Undeniable Photo of the Dying of Dreams

There are times when I just cannot help but think that humankind (photographers included) is in conflict with nature, and in essence, itself. Just look at what we do to our own environment, and talk about it so righteously, from afar. Better still, let us not talk about our planet, but of ourselves. When was the last time we planted a sapling and nurtured it until it grew into a tree, just like we do with our children? Are we all that shortsighted and self-important?

We must be. After all, these thoughts are not new. Huge blockbuster movies have been made from them. Even in those, there are grand speeches, and the human spirit eventually wins. We get our money's worth of self-satisfying endings. For something more real, we turn to photojournalism—the mirror and archives of our times, albeit somewhat self-curated. These photographers often risk everything, including their sanity and soul, to show a world as it exists to a world at large. We sometimes glance through these pictures. We take it upon ourselves to talk about it, everyday, until we are immune, and suspicious of every image, forming opinions before we have taken the time to see them. We then need a conversation about it. We move so far out of sight of being plainly receptive that, once in a rare while, the ordinary truth comes as a stinging shock, throwing us into an uneasy silence before we react, until the first of the voices start the cacophony yet again.

Aylan Kurdi. A beautiful little boy lies on a quiet beach, hands by his side, palms upturned, feet on the sand, face down at the edge of the placid, breaking waves, peacefully asleep. He wears a red t-shirt, knee length blue shorts, and black shoes. He is clothed like your child or mine, on a brisk morning by the sea. He sleeps like your child or mine. And just like your child or mine, Aylan is obviously loved, nurtured, and cared for. But in the simple, unembellished photograph, that could have been from your camera or mine, Aylan will not awaken.

An undeniable photo of the dying of dreams, I have yet to see a more deeply disturbing image in recent times. Somehow, equally disconcerting are the dialogue, analyses and criticisms that followed, of Aylan's family, the situation, the photograph and its viewers.

Of course, if nobody talks, who listens? It is best to be silent, for a while at least.

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Aylan Kurdi
2012-2015

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Participate in online contests, share your best tips and techniques to get your work noticed. Follow these simple guidelines:

For Your Pictures, Reader's Gallery and Reader's Tip:

- Visit <http://betterphotography.in/contests> and register yourself on the website
- Participate in the relevant contests on the page. There will always be a contest open for you to take part in!
- For Reader's Gallery contests, make sure the images have been made using a cellphone
- For Reader's Tip and Your Pictures contests, include a 100-word note on how and why you shot the image
- Winners of all the contests get featured on our website and can be featured in the magazine too. They will also receive special prizes!

Send in a synopsis, with low-resolution images for viewing, to contribute articles to the following sections:

On Assignment, Step-by-Step, Photofeature, Tips & Tricks, Shooting Technique, History, Story Behind the Picture

Get in Touch with us:

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- To showcase your best photographs: entries@betterphotography.in
- To contribute articles and for questions on photography: editor@betterphotography.in
- For your suggestions, appreciation and criticism on the magazine: feedback@betterphotography.in

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DESIGN: SANTOSH D KAMBLE



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**18 Photographers
Share their Incredible
Stories on Nature and
Wildlife Photography**

Tips, learnings and
secrets from some truly
spectacular photographs



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Every month, the 'Letter of the Month' will win a special gift from



"Klaudia's self-portraits reminds all of us that beauty reinvents itself in finding spaces within one's surroundings, among harmony and discord alike."



Sublime, Sensual, Surreal

Reading Klaudia Cechini's interview in the September 2015 issue of *Better Photography* reinforced my belief that the true appreciation of beauty is often a surreal process. As an aficionado of the Surrealist movement, I have long wondered if the saying, 'beauty lies in the eye of the beholder' is just idle rhetoric. Maybe it isn't. Perhaps the reason why Klaudia's self-portraits present vivid, enigmatic versions of herself is that she is not constrained by a set definition of beauty.

The most pristine form of beauty is that which cannot be described in mere words. At a time when there is an endemic of plastic standards of beauty and sexuality, Klaudia's work reminds all of us that beauty reinvents itself in finding spaces within one's surroundings, among harmony and discord alike.

Sameer Saurabh, Patna, via email.

Light in a Barrel

What differentiates *Better Photography* from other platforms dedicated to gear reviews is that the information is well organised, both in terms of context and perspective.

I was impressed with K Madhavan Pillai's review of the Canon PowerShot G3 X, that appeared in the September 2015 issue. The quality and description of the black and white and colour test shots showcased in the review, has motivated me to consider purchasing the camera, for the purpose of travel photography.

The finer details such as noise at different sensitivities were illustrated

➔ **Klaudia Cechini's interview in the August 2015 issue, was a showcase of her evocative self-portraits.**

simply enough to help even beginners and amateurs find their way among the nuances of photography.

However, the most salient part of the review was the threefold view of the camera from an ergonomic perspective—it is almost like a camera becomes a part of one's life, just like basic amenities.

Nagendra Naik, Kharagpur, via email.

Staring Back

A lot of photographs of people have them staring right into the camera. Studio photographers shooting images of people, often advise them to do so. I too had been doing the same for a while now, but for a completely different reason.

I pick my subjects with utmost care, making sure they are only people with remarkable, sharp facial features.

Imagine my surprise, then, when I picked up the September 2015 edition of the magazine, and found myself pulled into an image devoid of any eyes. David Fokos has, in a way, built a characteristic style for himself, producing a series of simple, stark images. These draw the viewer in and manage to blend a third dimension into the photographs. A picture that comes to mind is his image of an extended wooden bridge, which seems to extend forever.

Advait Bapat, Mumbai, via email.



➔ **The September 2015 issue featured David Foko's interview, where he talks about his minimalist photographs of landscapes.**

Photography, a Mental Block Breaker Indeed

When I read Supriya Joshi's frank and honest admission about having mental blocks, in the September 2015 issue of *Better Photography*, I was struck by a vague sense of déjà vu. I realised that mental blocks in whichever form, affect a lot

of people. I am a sufferer too.

Since I write for a newspaper in Kolkata, the job requires me to work at odd hours, and so, I find myself perpetually tired and sleepy. This in turn has led to a gradual deterioration in the way I work. But the

thing that really affected me the most was that for a long time I was in complete denial of my situation. The slump had permeated into every part of my brain, and I found that I had become a liability to myself and everyone else.

However, I found that photography has pulled me out of that land of no return. I have also come to realise that even when I don't have my favourite camera with me, my mind continues to make pictures, framing people and objects, and eventually making me 'see', even when I am unaware of it.

Now, I read a lot and think more about what I want to do, because I found that being true to myself is the first step to being rehabilitated. I would really like to give my heartfelt thanks to *Better Photography*, for helping me in this endeavour.

Jaideep Chatterjee, Kolkata, via email



We believe that the joy of a family photo is in displaying it. To make your special memories stand out, this **Letter of the Month** wins a special Photo Frame from Red Moments!



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"I have found that even when I don't have my favourite camera with me, my mind continues snapping photos by framing people and objects, thus eventually making me 'see' even when I am unaware of it."

Taking Inspiration

I have been obsessed with cats since my childhood. When I got to college, I was able to meet plenty of them, as they would roam around the college's residential campus. I would even see dogs and squirrels, and would use every opportunity to make photographs of them.

However, after a point, I felt that my images failed to convey the personality of the animal. Luckily, inspiration hit me, when I chanced upon David Alan Harvey's Instagram feed. Every now and then he posts about his two cats. While the pictures on their own are beautifully shot, I also enjoy reading the interesting captions that accompany the photographs.

Sachin Sai, Kharagpur, via email

Great Spread of Images

I enjoyed looking at the photographs of the monsoon themed Your Pictures contest, in the September 2015 issue of *BP*. I especially liked the winning image

shot by Sonam Phintso. The effect of the vibrant colours of the umbrellas, gave the photograph a remarkable, almost psychedelic effect. Staring at the picture for a sufficiently long time gives the impression of a movement.

I realised that sometimes, all it takes to create an optical illusion is the work of nature, with a little perspective distortion. It was a truly enjoyable spread of images.

Amit Tripathi, Indore, via email

➔ The September 2015 issue featured the winner and the honourable mentions of the monsoon themed **Your Pictures** contest.



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SnapShots

WHAT'S NEW

Olympus OM-D E-M10 Mark II

The OM-D E-M10 Mark II features a 16.1MP CMOS sensor and an ISO range of 200–25,600 (expandable to 100–25,600). It features 5-axis image stabilisation, a larger and higher resolution, EVF, 60p video recording and a 4K time lapse mode.



Ricoh Theta S Spherical Camera

The Ricoh Theta makes use of a dual-lens configuration to achieve 360° imagery. It comes equipped with two 12MP sensors, which can capture still images at 14.4MP, and 1080p video at 50fps. With a maximum shutter speed of 1/6400 and ISO sensitivity of 1600, the device supports low light shooting, live video streaming, Google Street View, in addition to automatic shutter priority and ISO priority exposure modes.



Panasonic Lumix G 25mm f/1.7 Lens

The latest addition to the Panasonic MFT lineup is aimed at enhancing prospects for low light shooting, depth of field control, superior inner focus and low-frequency contrast. The field of view is 47°, which is a 35mm equivalent of 50mm, on accounts of the Micro Four Thirds 2.0 crop factor.



Canon EF 35mm f/1.4L II Lens

The 35mm f/1.4 is Canon's Blue Spectrum Refractive Optics technology to control chromatic aberrations and color fringing. The lens is the equivalent of a 56mm on APS-C sensors, with a minimum focusing distance of 28cm, and a maximum magnification of 0.21x. It features an AF mode that uses a silent USM motor, and also facilitates full-time mechanical manual focusing.



Tamron Challenge is Back with its Fourth Edition

Tamron has announced the 2015 edition of its popular contest, celebrating photographers from various genres. Submissions for the competition are open across four major themes—*Most Innovative Use of Ultra Wide Angle and Wide Angle Lens*, *Most Innovative Use of Normal Lenses*, *Most Innovative Use of Telephoto and Ultra telephoto Lens*, and *Most Innovative Use of Macro Lens*.

Participants can submit up to a maximum of four images under each theme. Once submissions close on 15 November, 30 participants will be shortlisted for the final round. While this will be based on individual submissions, the final round will take into account the entire portfolio of the contestant. The Tamron Challenge thus,



picks its winner based not only on talent, but also on consistency in producing a diverse body of work.

The top four winners will each receive Rs. 25,000, the newly released Tamron lenses (SP 35mm f/1.8

Di VC USD and SP 45mm f/1.8 Di VC), a Manfrotto BeeFree Carbon Fiber tripod, and the Datacolor Spyder5 Pro. Therefore, the awards not only aim at recognising talent, but also helps to further it with state-of-the-art equipment. For more information visit www.tamron.in/tamronchallenge.

Anna Atkins Award for Indian Male Photographers

Dayanita Singh announced the Anna Atkins Prize for Indian Male Photographer (AAPIMP), in memory of the renowned botanist and photographer. Singh was inspired by Atkins' dexterity to self-publish the first ever photography book, titled *Photographs of British Algae*.



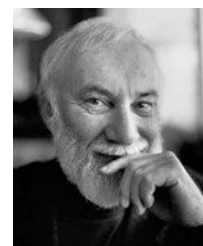
The award, a first of its kind, is open to Indian male photographers, and will be awarding prize money worth Rs. 50,000. Applicants are required to send a 500-1000 word proposal on the topic, 'How you feel your 'masculinity' has informed your photographic vision'. Along with this, they are also required to submit 10 photographs that will further illustrate their photographic vision, and a 'revealing selfie' too.

The award will be presented on 17 December by renowned archivist Nony Singh, at the Museum Bhavan in New Delhi. Last date of submissions is 15 November. The grant was announced on Singh's blog, www.dayanitasingh.org, which she regularly updates with interesting anecdotes and other musings.

“ Evolution in action: First God said, 'Let there be light'. Then he created two nude models. Now we have photographers. ”

BILL JAY (1940–2009)

Bill Jay was born in Maidenhead, England. Early in his career, Jay worked for several photographic periodicals and was the first editor/director of *Creative Camera* magazine and founder of *Album* magazine. Jay also founded the program of photographic studies at Arizona State University in USA, where he taught history and criticism classes for 25 years. He was also the first Director of Photography at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London. Bill Jay has published over 400 articles and is the author of more than 20 books on the history and criticism of photography.



Burk Uzzle

WHAT'S NEW

Canon Develops 250MP Sensor



Canon announced that it has developed a 250MP APS-H CMOS sensor, setting the record for the world's highest resolution for sensors smaller than the 35mm full-frame sensor.

The signal readout speed of the new sensor stands at 1.25 million pixels per second. At 5fps, the sensor is capable of capturing video footage at a resolution 125 times that of full HD video and 30 times that of 4K video. The prototype camera equipped with the sensor was able to capture distinguishable images of lettering on an aircraft 18 km away.

Huawei Honor 7i

The Huawei Honor 7i has a 13MP rear camera that can be flipped to point forward. In addition to a f/2 aperture, 28mm lens, and a dual-tone flash, the smartphone's fingerprint scanner can also be used as a camera shutter.



Elinchrom Litemotiv Softbox



The new Litemotiv softbox is a 16-sided modifier launched by Elinchrom. It can be used with or without the double diffusion panels, depending on the lighting effects required, in addition to

being heat-resistant and preventing hot spots on the subjects.

SanDisk expands SSD Range

SanDisk released six new Secure Storage Devices (SSD). The SanDisk Extreme 500 Portable SSD and the 900 Portable SSD offer secure encryption for private files, and storage options ranging from 120GB up to 1.92TB for the storage of high resolution photos, videos and files. The SanDisk Extreme Pro SSD has specifically been devised to handle games and other graphics-intensive applications. The SanDisk Ultra II SSD and the mSATA SSD are aimed at professionals who need a performance boost for their notebooks, tablets or PCs.



Mitakon 25mm f/0.95 Lens



Zhong Yi Optics' Mitakon 25mm f/0.95 lens for micro four thirds is an ultra-fast, manual focus prime lens with the 35mm equivalent of a 50mm lens. The lens, nicknamed "Speedmaster", is one of the more economical options for a 25mm

lens compatible with an MFT camera. However, the lens, may not be compatible with several models from the Olympus series.

'Low-light Monster' Diversifies its Palette

The Sony A7S II is similar to its predecessor in terms of its 12MP sensor and ISO 100–1,024,100. However, the latest release in the A7 series has struck a chord with photography and video enthusiasts, for providing a very significant feature. The new model allows users to switch between compressed and uncompressed modes, to provide 14-bit RAW files. It can support up to 4 trillion colours and a 60-fold increase over the existing palette in the A7 series.

Also, a lot more image information can be saved as compared to the existing 12-bit



RAW format, given the fact that the new model is capable of shooting video at 4K.

The new camera also features 5-axis internal image stabilisation, 5fps silent shooting mode, 0.78x viewfinder magnification, and a 169-point fast autofocus system. In addition to internal 4K, it supports full HD video

recording at 120fps, as well as internal 4x/5x slow motion recording. The A7R II and the A7S II are now compatible with Sony's a-mount lens lineup, which includes 13 native 'FE' full frame lenses. Eight new models are to be announced by the end of the calendar year, bringing the lineup to a total of 72.

Retrospective Season Celebrates Nostalgia

Jhaveri Contemporary recently collaborated with Raghbir Singh's estate, to organise the first exhibition to feature his work in India, since 1999. *Conversations in Colour: Raghbir Singh with Ram Rahman, Sooni Taraporewala, Ketaki Sheth* is curated by Shanay Jhaveri, and will be exhibited on 2 October, in Mumbai. It features not only some of his lesser-known images, but also new and recent work by three of his most illustrious protégés—Ram Rahman, Sooni Taraporewala, and Ketaki Sheth.

Ram Rahman is also part of another retrospective, featuring Sunil Janah. The exhibition, curated by him for the Swaraj Art Archive, will be inaugurated by Pheroza Godrej, at the National Gallery of Modern Art in Mumbai, on 1 October. The five-week exhibit will feature vintage images shot by Janah from 1940–60.

Also, the Delhi chapter of the NGMA is currently hosting a retrospective, *Prabuddha Dasgupta: A Journey*, in the memory of the photographer. The exhibit will go on till 22 November.

These exhibitions not only focus on the various social themes immortalised by the camera, but also draw interest towards the significant degree of nostalgia attached to these exhibits. It is indeed a season of reminiscence and retrospection of the impact left behind by the legendary photographers.



Sunil Janah



Raghbir Singh



Prabuddha Dasgupta

EVENTS

19 September–17 October
**Kashmir: Insider/
 Outsider, Veer
 Munshi &
 Amit Mehra**
 Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai



Amit Mehra

Sakshi Gallery is hosting a collection of works by Veer Munshi and Amit Mehra. The exhibition juxtaposes two different, vibrant perspectives of life in the valley, as portrayed by the two photographers.

1–10 October
**Indian Photography
 Festival**
 State Art Gallery, Hyderabad



John Issac

The festival includes master classes and talks by photographers from diverse genres, workshops, seminars, lectures, screenings and portfolio reviews. For more information, turn to page 106.

2 October
**Seascape
 Photography
 Experiential
 Workshop**
 Marina Beach, Chennai
 Macro photography expert Saritha Dattatreya is organising a seascape photography experiential workshop for enthusiasts in Chennai. The workshop is designed to provide practical experience by photography experts from Dr Caesar Photography (a conglomerate of professional photographers).

2 October
Canon Photo Walk
 Fort Kochi, Tamil Nadu
 The photo walk themed *Golden Moments at Golden Hours* will be mentored by Abin Alex. He will provide insights on capturing the picturesque beaches and the architectural style of the buildings. For more information, visit www.edge.canon.co.in/photo-walks.aspx

PRO TALK

Butterfly Lighting is a form of lighting in which the main source of light is placed high and directly in front of the subject.

National Geographic Acquired by Rupert Murdoch

National Geographic magazine's latest deal, worth USD 725 million, now places the ownership of 73% of its stake within the control of US-based media conglomerate 21st Century Fox. A new umbrella company, National Geographic Partners, will now control the media outlets of National Geographic, which include its TV channels, magazines, studios, travel, entertainment, licensing, and e-commerce.

It will also mark the first time that the magazine is not a non-profit enterprise, since its inception in 1888.

The merger has drawn mixed reactions. Readers and environmental agencies have expressed concern over the future of the magazine, considering the fact that the editorial stances of Fox, and the opinions of Rupert Murdoch, have consistently denied the incidence of climate change.

Zeiss Unveils New Lenses for Canon and Nikon DSLRs

Carl Zeiss has announced the Milvus, a new lineup of lenses for high resolution Canon and Nikon DSLRs. It consists of six lenses—the 21mm f/2.8, 35mm f/2, 50mm f/1.4, 85mm f/1.4, 50mm f/2, and 100mm f/2.

All the lenses feature manual focusing, and support shutter priority, manual exposure mode and aperture priority.

The Milvus lenses will also move hand-in-hand with cameras, as they make their progression to 6K video recording. In fact, the Nikon mount version of the lenses offers a de-click option for the aperture ring. The lenses can also be used on the Sony A7 cameras, via an adapter.



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Proify Photography Awards

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Prizes: The grand prize winner will receive USD 3000 (approx. Rs. 1,99,240).

Entry Fee: The cost varies between USD 18 (approx. Rs. 1195) to USD 25 (approx. Rs. 1660).

Website: www.proify.com

Deadline: 31 October

International Garden Photographer of the Year

The Competition: It is the world's premier contest for garden, plant and botanical photography.

Categories: The Beauty of Plants, Beautiful Gardens,

Wildlife in the Garden, Breathing spaces and more.

Prizes: The Single Image award winner will receive the title of the International Garden Photographer of the Year and 7500 pounds (approx. Rs. 7,65,170).

Entry Fee: A submission of four photographs will cost 10 pounds (approx. Rs. 1020).

Website: www.igpoty.com

Deadline: 31 October

La Grande Photo International Photography Awards 2015

The Competition: The contest is inviting amateur and professional photographers from across the globe.

Categories: Abstract, Advertising, Children and more.

Prizes: The La Grande Professional and Amateur Photographer of the Year will receive USD 1500 and USD 1000 (approx. Rs. 66,412), respectively.

Entry Fee: The cost ranges from USD 18 to USD 75 (approx. Rs. 4980).

Website: www.lagrande.photo

Deadline: 30 December

2015 International Photographer of the Year

The Competition: The contest aims to introduce leading talents to the world of contemporary photography.

Categories: Architecture, Editorial, Fine Art and more.

Prizes: The winner in the professional and amateur category will receive USD 2500 (approx. Rs. 1,65,930) and USD 1500 (approx. Rs. 99,610), respectively.

Entry Fee: The cost ranges from USD 20 (approx. Rs. 1330) to USD 30 (approx. Rs. 1990).

Website: www.ipoty.net

Deadline: 28 February, 2016

10-11 October

Macro Photography Workshop

Hotel Satkar Residency, Mumbai



Wildlife photographer Yuwaraj Gurjar will be conducting a workshop on the nuances of wildlife photography. The first day will include sessions on gadgets, lighting, dummy shoots and other advanced macro photography techniques. The second day will be held on-field, dedicated to the application of the techniques.

18 October

Sony Alpha Advanced Class

Artefact Towers, Nagpur

The Sony Alpha Community is organising a workshop for photography enthusiasts, and will cover portrait photography, shooting modes, autofocus systems, shooting bokeh. For more details, visit www.alphacommunity.sony.co.in/workshop/advanced-class-2

22-26 October

NCPA Photofestival

Piramal Art Gallery, Mumbai



Kulwant Roy

The five-day festival will comprise of photo talks and live tutorial sessions by eminent photographers, portfolio review sessions for budding photographers, and full-day library sessions. For more information, turn to page 112 of this issue.

10-11 November

Photography and Postprocessing Workshop

Ramee Grand, Pune

Sudhir Shivram will be organising a two-day workshop, where interested participants can opt for either the Basics and Advanced Photography Workshop, or the Postprocessing Workshop, or both.

PRO TALK

Surrealism was originally an early 1920's artistic movement. The word is often used to indicate images that take reality to a new level.

The iPhone 6S & 6S+ Comes with Significant Updates

The iPhone 6s and the 6s Plus sport a brand new 12MP rear camera, with f/2.2 aperture and a dual-LED flash. The front camera has also been upgraded to 5MP.

Both the phones now support 4K video recording, with the 6S Plus featuring an optical image stabilisation feature. The Panorama mode too, has been improved to capture images to up to 63MP. Then there is the 3D Touch feature, which



depending on the amount of pressure placed on the screen, will give users access to different areas on the phone.

Another new addition is the Live Photos feature, which captures just enough movement before and after you press the shutter, to create a 1.5-second animation. However, the final product is not a video, but a single JPEG file that consists of a series of images. Pricing of both the phones is yet to be announced.

Rangefinder App Fine-tunes the iPhone Experience

Leica released Red Dot Camera, a manual Rangefinder style app for the iPhone. It features a magnified patch at the centre of the viewfinder, which can be controlled by means of a ring to achieve better focus. You can also manually control exposure. The app also emulates Leica's M rangefinder

by means of displaying frame lines that simulate the focal lengths of 35mm and 50mm lenses, a significant development given the fact that the iPhone camera has a fixed 28mm focal length. The app is priced at USD 2.99 (approx. Rs. 198), and requires a version of iOS 8.0 or later.

THE MONTH THAT WAS

Bourne & Shepherd: Figures In Time

Tasveer Art Gallery, Mumbai organised an exhibition of 19th century vintage photographs by Samuel Bourne, Charles Shepherd and the Bourne & Shepherd Studio, as a part of its 10th anniversary. The exhibit was held in collaboration with the Museum of Art and Photography in Bengaluru, from 10 August-15 September.

Canon India Celebrates World Photography Day

To mark the occasion of World Photography Day, Canon India partnered with the EOS Academy

and organised an inter-school online photography contest. The competition was held across 60 selected schools from the country, from 10-16 August. Employees of Canon were also encouraged to take part in another photography contest, themed *Colours*. Then on 19 August, Canon India also hosted a series of photography workshops to mark the World Photography Day event.

Photography Workshop

Filmmaker and photographer Sudeep Bhattacharya organised a photography workshop, aimed at providing valuable insights to beginners. The workshop which took place at Nivesaa in Bengaluru, on August 30, covered topics ranging from camera formats to critiquing photographs.

Global Photo Walk

On 26 September, Fujifilm organised the 500px Global Photo Walk at Dharavi, Mumbai. One of the objectives of the event was to encourage aspiring photographers to interact with their peers, and to explore what makes the city special for all of them.

Lightroom Workshop

Light Chasers Photography, an Indian photography touring company, organised a workshop specifically dedicated to postprocessing. The workshop took place on 27 September, in New Delhi. It provided insights into the features and utilities of Adobe Photoshop Lightroom.

One of the photographs on display at the *Bourne & Shepherd: Figures In Time* exhibition by Tasveer Art Gallery.



Bourne & Shepherd Studio

INDUSTRY VOICE

"We want photographers to become the storytellers of the events they cover."



Prabhala Raghuvir
Founder and CEO,
Brown Box Imaging Pvt Ltd

Stories are much more powerful when shared easily. The Media-book contains images, video, audio, text and web links to enable photographers to create powerful multimedia stories that their customers can share easily.

We launched the MediaPix app and our services in select cities. Encouraged by the response from consumer-focused and professional photographers, we have just launched our services in Punjab. The app only requires entering a numeric code to download and view the media book. Media books published on MediaPix are very secure. They can't be copied, printed or videos taken out of the book. The engine underlying the publishing of these books is very robust and is being used by many big organizations in the publishing industry.

With the advent of smart phones and mobile apps, it's become much more convenient for the older generation to access the internet and social media. Also the current 'selfie' generation loves sharing images. Making sharing easy with the older generation is a key part of our plans.

The media-book licensing formats address the different security requirement of different customers too. We have kept the same prices for both the licenses (single-user license and multi-user license).

We want to take advantage of new and cutting edge mobile and imaging technologies. We are currently looking at mobile based video streaming technologies and 3D printing for creating new products and services for our consumers.

— As told to Sachin Sai

Tamron Enters the Fast-aperture Prime Lens World

The Tamron SP 35mm f/1.8 Di VC USD and the SP 45mm f/1.8 Di VC USD marks the debut of the company's foray into fast prime lenses.

Both are compatible with full-frame and APS-C cameras. The lens' Vibration Compensation feature makes it beneficial for photographers interested in shooting in low light and videographers too.

The 35mm lens can focus as close as 0.2m, while the 45mm model focuses to 0.29m. This Tamron claims is the



best in class for non-macro lenses, and for lenses with such a wide maximum aperture.

The lenses also are anti-reflective and have a moisture resistant construction. On the face of it, the build quality of the lens is quite good, with its thick focusing manual rings. It is priced at USD 599 (approx. Rs. 39,606), and is available for Canon, Nikon and Sony Alpha mount, without the VC function in the latter.

Getty Images Instagram Grant Winners Unveiled

Adriana Zehbrauskas, Ismail Ferdous and Dmitry Markovare are the three recipients of the Getty Images Instagram Grant, an award that not only recognises the efforts of photographers in documenting stories focused on underrepresented communities, but also assists them in continuing the same.

The award consists of a USD 10,000 (approx. Rs. 6,61,746) grant and a one-year mentorship with Getty's award-winning photojournalists John Moore, Chris McGrath, and Andrew Burton. The judging panel consisted of David Guttenfelder, Kira Pollack, Maggie Steber, Malin Fezehai, and Ramin Talaie.



Ismail Ferdous

Ferdous won the award for documenting the aftermath of the Rana Plaza collapse that occurred in Bangladesh.

BOOK REVIEW

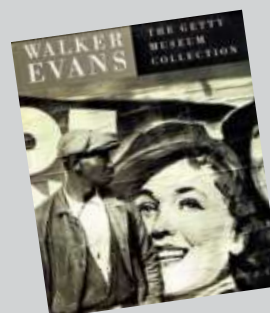
Title: Walker Evans: The Getty Museum Collection
Authors: Judith Keller
ISBN: 978-0500541975
Publisher: Thames and Hudson
Price: USD 63 (approx. Rs. 4177)

Museum in its Own Right

John Walsh's foreword to, and Judith Keller's notes on *Walker Evans: The Getty Museum Collection* are best savored after the reader has had the chance to go through the most comprehensive collection of the legendary photographer's works ever compiled. For the uninitiated, Evans' versatile body of work—ranging from the famous, to the less familiar, to the unpublished, speaks volumes of sheer brilliance. Those familiar with a career that spanned nearly five decades, however, will find the collection rich in subtext as well as context, and the former is one of many aspects that makes this collection a museum in its own right.

The other is the organisation of the book. Each image is accompanied by captions mentioning the subject, location, date, size, and inscriptions by Evans, sometimes with elaborate references to other bodies of work. Very much like in a museum, the chapters of the book traverse time and space, starting with a chronology of life in Cuba and New York in the 1930s. The reader is then treated to an interregnum of a collection of timeless artifacts from the African continent, being reminded over and over of the impact of ancient cultures on fledgling nations. Evans' stints with various assignments have also been meticulously documented, and they add to the narrative of the photographer as storyteller.

True to its name, the book consists of every known record of Evans' work, within the permanent collection of the J Paul Getty Museum, and it is beyond doubt that some of them should have been printed in a larger size. The book is replete with anecdotes both by and about Evans' journey, through three continents and a lifetime of familiarising the world with the realms of the ancient, the transient, and the transcendental.



— Written by Sachin Sai

Widely Shared 'ISIS Flag' Photograph is a Lie

The image of protesters clashing with the police, which ostensibly depicts refugees carrying the ISIS flag in Europe, has been declared a hoax. The photograph had recently gone viral on social media and was also picked up by various media outlets.

The Independent reported that the image, shot around May 2012, was that of a counter-protest at an anti-Islamic rally in Germany. The flag is similar to that used by the ISIS, and has been used as a religious symbol, long before its association with the group.

Various right-wing news organisations had carried the image as proof of the claim that the ISIS was using the refugee crisis



Image Source: The Independent

to smuggle its members into Europe. It's unfortunate how an unrelated image has been used to propagate incorrect claims.

Nikon Registers New Software Trademarks

Nikon recently registered two trademarks with the United States Patent and Trademark Office. The trademarks, C Nikon and V Nikon, are rumoured to have been filed for soon-to-be-announced software programs.

C Nikon is a digital photography software with features image editing, printing, browsing, exporting and sharing. On the other hand, the V Nikon is the company's advanced software aimed at providing technological support for digital photography and video-making.

Oppo Launches the R7 Plus and the R7 Lite

Oppo announced the newest additions to their R7 series of phones—the Oppo R7 Plus and the Oppo R7 Lite. The R7 Plus and the R7 Lite both feature a 13MP rear camera and an 8MP front-facing camera.

While the R7 Plus runs on a 6-inch full HD display, with 3GB RAM and 32GB internal storage, the R7 Lite features a 5-inch full HD display, 2GB RAM, and 16GB internal storage.

Aside from this, the phone also features a fingerprint sensor feature, right below the rear camera, to enable users to unlock the phone. The Oppo R7 Plus is currently priced at Rs. 29,990, while the Oppo R7 Lite is priced at Rs. 17,990.



Indian Photographer Bags ICS Accolade

Vijayawada-based professional photographer Tamma Srinivasa Reddy, was awarded the title of the Grand Master Distinction by the Image Colleague Society (ICS). The award is ICS' recognition of his passion for and contribution to black and white photography. He is also the sixth Indian to receive the title, which will be presented to him in the United States in December.

Reddy has been an active photographer since 1984. He had earlier participated in various international photography competitions organised by the ICS, the



N Kishore

Photographic Society of America, the Royal Photographic Society and the International Federation of Photographic Art. Presently, he is a photojournalist working for *India Today* and *Dainik Bhaskar*.

River Tern Photograph Lands NAPSL Award

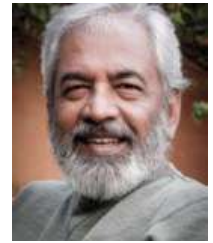
The National Association of Photographers—Sri Lanka (NAPSL), awarded Manjunath S Krishnamurthy, from Bengaluru, for a rare photograph of a courtship ritual among River Terns. Manjunath describes the image as a

challenging shot, since many male River Terns compete in courting the female river tern, but the first to approach it with food is allowed to continue with the ritual. The image was shot at the outskirts of Mysore, near the river Cauvery.

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Dinesh Khanna

On Building Legacies

Recently, I was conducting a workshop, when a thought hit home quite suddenly. The fact is that I have been photographing for more than 45 years, the last 25 years of which I have been a professional photographer. But this piece is not about me. It's about what I have felt about photography, and more importantly about Indian photography and what has contributed to it to its growth.

I have often, and more so during the last few years, wondered about the trajectory of Indian photography. And if there is any such thing, then what is it? And if there is indeed no such singular thing then, does it really matter? Considering that India is such a diverse and multi-layered country would it be possible to have a unitary form or style of photography, which at a given time can be dubbed 'Indian photography.' However, one can safely say that most photographers do spend the years developing a style, whether by accident or design. And, of course, all of us invest a lot of time and effort developing our careers. But there are only a rare few who besides building remarkable careers, don't rest on their laurels and take on the responsibility of developing institutions dedicated to the art form we call photography.

I would like to talk about two such photographers in this column since I have had the privilege of seeing them at work from close quarters over the years. Actually, the interesting thing is that I haven't ever seen them working. Both of them don't work. They are on a mission. They are consumed by their passion for photography and it's this fuel, which ignites and propels all that they do. They may not agree with me, but they are single-minded, focused, and totally driven people and it's these qualities, which makes them special. They have a very clear vision of what they are aiming for and approach it in a methodical and highly productive manner. They are also intensely curious and check everything to the minutest detail themselves and therefore, are very knowledgeable about every aspect of the task they are pursuing. This also makes them a pain in the butt for anyone working with them. But working with them has been a hugely inspirational and educational experience, nonetheless.

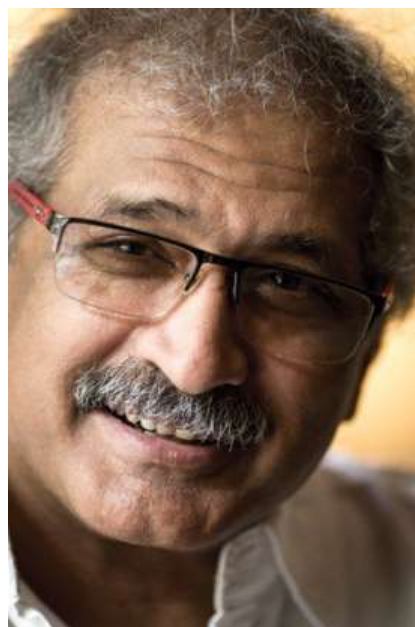
The two photographers I am referring to are, Prashant Panjiar and Aditya Arya. Prashant, is the tour de force behind the Delhi Photo Festival. And Aditya has been

a collector of antique cameras for his museum for the last several years. For both men, the reason for building these institutions is their sheer love for the medium. And they both engage with it in a way, which goes way beyond just the act of making images or a career in photomaking.

Prashant, with a team of dedicated volunteers, is now putting together the third edition of the Delhi Photo Festival, which for him is a way of bringing the best of contemporary international photography to Indian photographers. It is his intense passion for the art form and his incredible energy and dedication that have helped him build this institution. And it goes way beyond just building a career.

Aditya on the other hand has been collecting vintage cameras, using his own resources, and by now has over a 1,000 of them, each unique in its own way. As a collection these cameras tell us the story of the development and evolution of photography since the time it was invented. It's Aditya's love for history and photography, which has inspired him to follow this passion. And he is hell-bent on making sure that the Museo Camera Museum has a permanent home.

The Indian photographic community in particular and society at large must acknowledge and support such heroes, their efforts and the institutions they are building. After all they are doing this for photography and the profession will benefit more from this than Prashant and Aditya ever will themselves. **BP**



On the left is Aditya Arya and on the right is Prashant Panjiar. Both images were made by Dinesh Khanna.

Dinesh Khanna is co-founder of the Delhi Photo Festival and its parent body, Nazar Foundation. He is also one of the Festival Directors for 2015. He has worked as a freelance photographer, educator and workshop mentor. After working in Advertising for a decade he took to full-time photography from 1990.

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Anirban Brahma

A self-taught photographer with a keen interest in photographing weddings and festivals, Anirban was the 2010 winner of the Man and his Environment category in BP's WPOY.

Diwali has always held a special place in my heart. As a young boy, it wasn't just the sweets and fireworks that I was enthralled by, but the excitement of getting together with family and friends and immersing myself in the warmth of the festivities. Even to this day, I eagerly look forward to the festival. However this time, instead of immortalising the moments into memories, I know that I can preserve them with my camera.

Diwali is also an exciting time for photography. Like any festival, it presents the photographer with several subjects to shoot. All you

have to do is pick one you are most interested in. I for one am very interested in giving people a glimpse into the elaborate preparations involved in making the festival what it is. It could be something as simple as photographing my mother or aunts preparing sweets at home, or documenting how idol makers breathe life into clay by turning them into elaborate and colourful gods and goddesses.

But let's not forget that Diwali is a festival not just celebrated by Hindus but people from different communities



across the country. It's this interaction that I am always in the pursuit of capturing. So you will always find me at the heart of any such get-together or party, where I am constantly photographing the different vibrant moods.

Since the festival of lights is at its best at night, the use of flash photography becomes necessary in the low light conditions. In this sense, eneloop batteries have been instrumental in making this process smooth and easy. I don't think I will be able to find a more reliable brand than eneloop.



All photographs by Anirban Brahma

“eneloop batteries have been instrumental in ensuring that I make great pictures when employing flash photography techniques.”

Anirban Brahma

eneloop Recommended
by Anirban Brahma

Benefits of Using eneloop

1 Faster Recycle Times

eneloop and eneloop Pro improve the speed of external flashguns to allow more than 400 and 800 flashes respectively. At the same time the flash charging time is not reduced. It manages to complete charging at 3.3sec.

FOCUS of the MONTH

2 Low Self-discharge

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Alkaline batteries have a faster discharge in freezing cold weather. However, with eneloop even temperatures of 0°C, it has the prior discharge characteristics to that of Alkaline batteries.



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GearGuide

HOW WE TEST

Product Categorisation

We first segregate products into categories for the purpose of equitability in testing. The DSLR is divided into entry-level, semi-professional and professional categories. For compacts, we distinguish between advanced and basic compact cameras. Similarly, we also test consumer and pro lenses, flashguns, printers, and other photographic accessories and gear.

The Process

We primarily test for features, performance, build, ergonomics, warranty and support. While this remains constant, the weightage we give to these parameter differs from category to category, because different types of consumers have diverse expectations from products.

Final Ratings

Under each main parameter, we list out hundreds of individual variables (for eg. colour accuracy for individual colours in different lighting, individual features, dynamic range, center-to-edge definition, light falloff, etc) against which we either give points or simply mark 'yes' or 'no'. Thus, we arrive at a score for that parameter, and then, the final score, denoted as a percentage. Additionally, based on the current pricing of a product, a star rating for 'Value for Money' is considered. Value for Money does not affect the final percentage, because prices for products change constantly.

Our Seals of Approval

Any product that scores 80% or higher in individual tests gets 'BP Recommended'—a seal of approval from our team. In comparison tests, we also tag products as 'BP Best Performer' and 'BP Best Value for Money'.

BP Excellence Awards

At the end of the calendar year, the highest rated products in each category automatically win the Better Photography Excellence Award. This is Better Photography's recognition of the very best products launched in the course of the year, and the companies that made them.



Sony Alpha 7R II

Just Like Jazz

Sony has finally made its way to center stage, and has captured everyone's attention. **K Madhavan Pillai** puts the technology laden 42.4MP Sony Alpha 7R II to the test, to find out if it can hit the right notes.

Photography and jazz have many things in common. The two arts began at the same time, and have a history of brilliance, innovation and absorbing influences.

I love jazz, and I was absolutely thrilled when I got the chance to photograph the singularly greatest jazz legend from India, Louiz Banks, and his group, the Matrixx Trio, during a rehearsal. Having had a couple of weeks to get to grips with the Sony Alpha 7R II, with the Sony Zeiss Vario-Tessar 24-70mm f/4 mounted on, I was happy to be using them on that day.

The Alpha 7R II is the megapixel flagship of Sony's mirrorless range, and an upgrade of the 36MP Alpha 7R. It follows in its predecessors footsteps

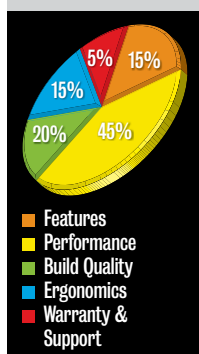
by squeezing a full frame sensor into a body that is much smaller and lighter than equivalent DSLRs (the 36MP Nikon D810 and the 50MP Canon EOS 5DS R, both of which are immediate competitors in resolution and price, despite not being mirrorless cameras).

Though the styling of the 7R II is similar to the 7R, it seems apparent that Sony has taken the criticisms of the first version seriously. There is a lot under the hood that makes 7R II a very different camera, beginning with the sensor.

Features

The new Exmor R CMOS sensor at the heart of the 7R II is the world's first full frame back illuminated chip. The benefits

WEIGHTAGE OF PARAMETERS



TEST

**Canon EF 50mm
f/1.8 STM**

New normal on the block

36



TEST

**Olympus M.ZUIKO ED
7-14mm f/2.8 PRO**

An ultrawide with attitude

38



TEST

**Zeiss Batis 25mm f/2
A lens with more than
that meets the eye**

40



of its enhanced light gathering capabilities is seen in the extended ISO range of 50 to 1,02,400 (the 7R could shoot between ISO 50 to 25,600).

A Bionz X image processor supports the sensor, allowing continuous shooting at 5fps (similar to the D810 and 5DSR). While this may not sound very high, considering the huge volume of RAW data created by the sensor (about 44MB per image), it is quite respectable. Sony has also just announced an upcoming firmware upgrade that adds much needed, user-selected, 14-bit compressed and uncompressed RAW capability (so far, RAW was only available as lossy compressed files). This would also mean significantly larger file sizes.

The Alpha 7R II uses a new, 'Fast Hybrid AF' system comprising 399 phase detect and 25 contrast detect focus points. Superior to the Alpha 7 II's system, it covers 45% of the image area. The camera also features a the 5-axis, sensor-shift image stabilisation

system first seen in the Sony Alpha 7 II. The company claims a shutter speed benefit of up to 4.5 stops. The micromotors that drive the stabilisation also double up as an anti-dust mechanism and vibrate to shake off any particles of dust adhering to the surface of the sensor. You can feel the intense vibration when you enable it... which can be a bit disconcerting at first.

New in the 7R II is also a reduced vibration shutter designed to cut mechanical front and rear curtain vibration by up to 50% compared to the 7R. It is tested for 500,000 cycles. The 7R II is also has a completely silent electronic shutter. It provides the users the same max. shutter speed (up to 1/8,000sec). However, it is prone to the rolling shutter problem.

The EVF is an OLED of 2.4 million dots. A doublesided aspherical lens in the EVF delivers a rather large magnification of 0.78x. The 1.23 million dot rear LCD panel tilts, but does not swivel.

🔴 The superbly talented Gino Banks at the drums, lost in his rhythms, wearing a T-Shirt that reads "Miles Davis, The Complete Prestige Recordings, 1951-1956". The 5fps burst speed was just not fast enough to keep up with his hands.

Exposure: 1/320sec at f/4 (ISO 3200)

WHAT'S IN THE BOX

- Alpha 7R II body
- 2 lithium batteries
- Battery charger
- Body cap
- Micro USB cable
- Neck Strap
- Hot shoe cap
- Eyepiece cup



All photographs by K Madhavan Pillai

The Alpha 7R II is one of the most fully featured camera for video. 4K video can be recorded directly onto the memory card, with a bitrate of 100Mbps using the XAVC-S codec (for recording more detail in the movement within the frame). More than this, the 7R II is capable of video with no pixel binning in the Super 35mm mode. 120fps at 50Mbps in HD is possible too. One needs to use a SDXC card with a minimum write speed rating of UHS 3, to enable continuous in-camera 4K recording.

Pro video features, including 'Picture Profiles' (standard on most Sony cameras) allow you to fine-tune the look of movies by adjusting gradation, colour and detail, before storing it as a profile for future use. 'Time Coding' and the ability to shoot in 'S-Log2 Gamma' allow a wider dynamic range for smooth graduation, and minimises whiteout and blackout. A pair of 3.5mm ports allow videographers to connect an external microphone and a headphone.

32 Handling

The Alpha 7R II has many improvements over the 7R, including a bevy of dedicated and customisable buttons, better placement of control dials, and a much higher level of overall customisability of controls.

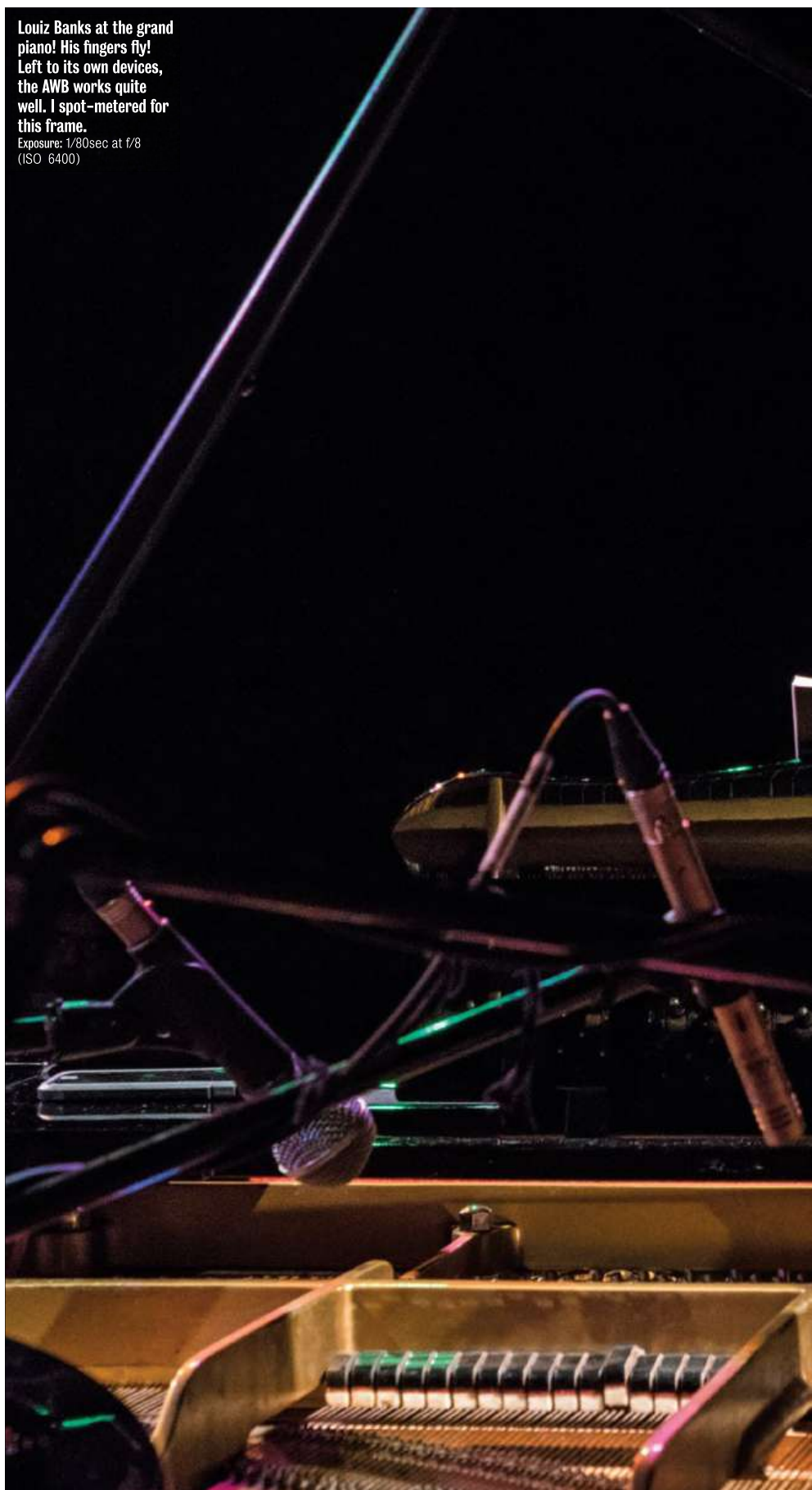
Yet, despite this, the 7R II has got several quirks, some of which take away from the handling finesse of the camera. For instance, since the EVF has a proximity sensor, I assigned the OK button at the back to manually switch between EVF and LCD (an effective way to conserve the rather limited battery). This does not function in the playback mode, requiring me to move out of playback, switch on the LCD, and then press the play button again.

In playback, while the rotary dial on the back scrolls between images, I cannot assign the OK button in the centre to enlarge the view to 100%, which would have been the most convenient way to go about it. Rather, I am required to use the C3 button beside the EVF to enlarge. Pressing the button again continues enlarging, but it does not switch back to the normal view after maximum enlargement. To do that, I need to press the OK button!

One can get used to all of these after a while, but improving on them will provide a more cohesive handling experience. ▶

Louiz Banks at the grand piano! His fingers fly! Left to its own devices, the AWB works quite well. I spot-metered for this frame.

Exposure: 1/80sec at f/8
(ISO 6400)







Sheldon D'Silva, completely absorbed during a solo on his bass guitar. I particularly liked the B&W creative style setting. The low key tonal range is just the way I like it, contrast set to -1.
Exposure: 1/60sec at f/4 (ISO 1600)

34

ALSO LOOK FOR

- Nikon D810
- Canon EOS 5DS R

Performance

Pitched against the Nikon D810 and the Canon EOS 5DS R, the Alpha 7R II has the best high resolution sensor we have tested yet! And that says a lot. The 7R II has a stop of high ISO advantage over the Canon, and about half a stop over the Nikon, with slightly better dynamic range over both.

Living up to its Zeiss legacy, Sony's 24-70mm

renders images well for this sensor too.

And the quality of video is an eye-opener.

So where does it falter? Given that 42MP is pixels enough for most practical purposes, I expected less aggressive smoothening in the JPEGs at higher ISOs, and less compression artifacts. Both Nikon and Canon fare better here. The magic of the Sony sensor lies in processing the RAWs.

PLUS

- Sensor quality
- State-of-the-art
- 5-axis stabilisation

MINUS

- Low light AF
- Handling quirks

ERGONOMICS

Front



The shutter button is much better positioned in the 7R II as compared to the 7R. Despite the contoured grip, some photographers, especially those with big hands, will find that reaching the front and rear input dials will take some getting used to.

Top



The handgrip is more recessed than the 7R. The two customisable buttons on the top are well positioned. I have always preferred a compensation dial instead of a button. The mode dial is not very easy to reach, and a dial lock on it is unnecessary.

Rear



There are two customisable buttons at the back, along with a number of dedicated function buttons. The AF/MF AEL switch is an excellent innovation. Along with the C3 button set to actuate AF, MF/AF can be controlled extremely well.

SPECIFICATIONS

Model name	Sony Alpha 7R II
MRP	Rs 2,39,990
Effective pixels	42.4 megapixels
Max. resolution	8688 x 5792 pixels
Sensor size, type	24 x 36mm, back illuminated CMOS, 7952 x 5304 pixels, sensor cleaning, sensor based 5-axis stabilisation
Recording formats	Stills: 14bit RAW, JPEG Movie: 4K full frame, super 35mm, XAVC-S, AVCHD, MP4, YCbCr 4:2:2 8bit / RGB 8bit through HDMI
Focusing system and modes	Fast Hybrid AF (399 phase detect points/contrast-detection AF), AF-A, AF-S, AF-C, DMF (Direct Manual Focus), Manual Focus, Sensitivity: EV-2 to 20 (ISO 100 equivalent at f/2)
Metering	1200-zone evaluative metering, Multi-segment, center-weighted & spot
Shutter type and Shutter speed range	Electronically-controlled, vertical-traverse, focal-plane, 30–1/8000sec, bulb
Colour space	sRGB, Adobe RGB
ISO	Auto, 100-25,600 (expandable to 50-1,02,400)
Viewfinder	0.5in type EVF, 2359k dots OLED, diopter correction
LCD	3in, 1228k sots, tilting
Other Settings	13 Picture Effects, 13 Creative Styles, Adjustment of contrast, saturation and sharpness, Dynamic Range Optimiser (auto/level 1-5), Auto HDR, AWB, 11 presets, custom
Other Features	WiFi (view on smartphone/TV) / NFC (one touch remote & sharing)
Battery	Lithium-ion
Dimensions, Weight	27 x 96 x 60mm, 582g

The Matrixx Trio pose for a portrait just after their rehearsal
Exposure: 1/100sec at f/6.3 (ISO 4000)



In good light, the AF is quick enough, and accurate. By mirrorless standards, AF is very fast indeed. However, it still lags behind DSLRs by a margin in very low light levels. Continuous focus and tracking work well too, but display an unusual behaviour. At the higher f numbers, the image in the EVF or LCD 'wavers' rapidly, seemingly between the nearest and farthest points of the DOF for several seconds, even in situations where the subject is isolated.

The battery life is terrible. It runs down in quickly, and takes over four hours to recharge! Luckily, there are two batteries bundled with then camera.

Beyond this, the camera is fast, able, and produces excellent results.

Conclusion

In recent years, few photography companies have been as innovative as Sony, and the 7R II maintains this reputation. The camera is meant for a certain type of user though. It is not particularly given to street, action, or quick low light photography. In that case, you would be better served with one of the DSLRs. Yet, as an upgrade from the 7R, the 7R II holds its own. It is priced at Rs. 2,39,990, and very well-suited for photographers who practice fine art, studio, still life, portraiture, landscapes or fashion. For those who need the resolution, the question to ask next is if you need pro 4K video. If you do, it really does not get better than the Sony Alpha 7R II. **BP**

Noise Test



ISO 100 to 400 provides the best dynamic range. Noise becomes apparent at ISO 800, but images at full resolution are easily usable till ISO 3200, and till ISO 6400 if the images are not underexposed. ISO 12,800 needs noise removal from the RAW. Colour noise becomes prominent at ISO 25,600. At this point, conversion to B&W or reducing the print size is required.

FINAL RATINGS

Features	14/15
42.4MP sensor, pro 4K video with in-camera recording, back illuminated sensor, 5 axis IS	
Performance	40/45
Superb detail, silent operation, poor JPEGs	
Build Quality	18/20
robust magnesium alloy construction	
Ergonomics	11/15
Very customisable, some handling quirks	
Warranty & Support	4/5
Two-year warranty, wide service network	

OVERALL 87%

Who should buy it? Serious enthusiasts or commercial photographers in fashion, product, landscape and portraiture, who also need high-end 4K video capabilities

Why? The sensor offers the best high-resolution quality yet, and it is quite versatile. Along with the low light capable Alpha 7S II, the 7R II has the most comprehensive video functionality.

Value for Money ★★★★★☆



Canon EF 50mm f/1.8 STM

The Nifty Fifty Reloaded

The Canon EF 50mm f/1.8 STM comes as a welcome successor to the 50mm f/1.8 II. Natasha Desai finds out just how improved it is.

This has not been a good year for a firm favourite, the Canon EF 50mm f/1.8 II. First, Yongnuo announced a near identical clone and then, after completing 25 years of being the best inexpensive lens and a must-have second lens for any photographer, it has seen a successor, the Canon 50mm f/1.8 STM. It is the gear equivalent of being dumped unceremoniously. Jokes aside, this update to the Canon 50mm f/1.8 has been a long time coming.

Features

The most obvious addition to the lens is the STM stepping motor for silent AF. The STM is supposed to deliver “smooth servo AF for movies and speedy AF for stills”. At least, that’s what we would hope for. It is definitely much quieter than both its predecessor and the competition. This is bound to attract video shooters, particularly.

Honestly though, the AF speed is just as fast, not significantly faster as the older 50mm f/1.8. Like its predecessor, the EF 50mm f/1.8 STM focusing causes the inner lens tube to extend outwards for the shorter focus distances.

One of the main uses of such large aperture lenses is to be able to isolate the subject from the foreground or background by throwing them out of focus. This makes bokeh a significant point of consideration for me. The lens now has seven aperture

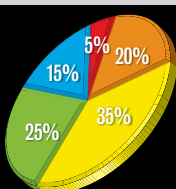
PLUS

- Build quality
- Maximum aperture of f/1.8
- Price

MINUS

- No distance scale
- Slight fringing

WEIGHTAGE OF PARAMETERS



- Features
- Performance
- Build Quality
- Ergonomics
- Warranty & Support

SPECIFICATIONS

Model name	Canon EF 50mm f/1.8 STM
MRP	Rs. 8995
Lens construction	6 elements in 5 groups
Closest focusing distance	0.35m
Max. Magnification	0.21x
Diaphragm blades	7
Max. Aperture	1.8
Dimensions, Weight	69.2 x 39.3mm, 160g



Natasha Desai

blades instead of five, which means you will no longer be plagued by pentagonal bokeh. Although, the bokeh that you get with this new 50mm is more oval than round. Other optical improvements to the lens include better lens coating and a change in the optical design.

Handling

The major difference in the successor is the body redesign. It is now housed in a plastic lens barrel that feels far sturdier than the older 50mm. Most importantly though, the lens now comes with a metal mount. The previous Canon 50mm f/1.8 lens, while fantastic in terms of sharpness for its cost, was notorious for poor build quality, much inferior to that of its Nikon equivalent. In that aspect, this STM version is definitely a huge improvement.


Unlike its predecessor, the lens also comes with Full Time Manual focus override. Along with a new rubberised focusing ring, this makes the new lens far more ergonomic for someone shooting video (aside from, of course, the STM focusing that helps while shooting video). However, the lack of distance markings is a little disappointing, especially considering that this is a focal length that is conducive to the use of manual focus for stills and hyperfocal distance setting for street photography.


Performance

Every wide aperture lens has to strike a fine balance—f/1.8, sharpness, size and cost. At f/1.8 the results are creative at best. A small centre portion gives you sharp results, but it tends to deteriorate rapidly as you go towards the edges. The sharpness is excellent from f/2.8 onwards, giving you the sharpest results after f/4. This is not a lens you may want to use on one of the new high-resolution bodies, but for a 18MP APS-C camera or a 20/24MP full frame camera, it proves to be great value. There is slight barrel distortion that is visible, but it's negligible and can be easily fixed.

Vignetting is noticeable at f/1.8 but improves from f/2.8 and is nearly absent after f/4. Flare is very well controlled. A new Super Spectra Coating (SSC), which has been applied to reduce chromatic aberrations and ghosting, works quite well. However, some spherical aberration is noticeable.

Conclusion

The lens produces pleasing pictures, with decent optics at a great price, all bundled into a significantly sturdier body than its esteemed predecessor. Across the board, the 50mm prime lens has long held the position of being a must have. I see no reason why the tradition should not continue. Unless you are a 50MP user, go get yourself the Canon 50mm f/1.8 STM! 

 I was very happy with the fact that the horse, and the riders' expressions were captured in good detail. The AF performed admirably well on the Canon EOS 6D. Exposure: 1/200sec at f/5.6 (ISO 400)

FINAL RATINGS

Features	17/20
Fast optical speed with f/1.8, AF for video	
Performance	31/35
Decent focus, chromatic aberrations	
Build Quality	22/25
Sturdy plastic barrel, metal mount	
Ergonomics	12/15
Quieter autofocus, Full Time Manual focus override	
Warranty & Support	4/5
Two year warranty with a wide service network across India	

OVERALL 86%

Who should buy it? Full frame and APS-C users who want excellent quality and low light capabilities on a budget.

Why? Good optics in a sturdier body than its predecessor at an unbeatable price.

Value for Money ★★★★★



Olympus M.ZUIKO DIGITAL ED 7–14mm f/2.8

Wide-eyed in Low Light

The Olympus M.ZUIKO DIGITAL ED 7–14mm f/2.8 PRO is the first ever f/2.8 ultrawide zoom for the MFT mount. Shridhar Kunte tests how this unique lens performs.

38

Last month, we tested the Olympus 8mm fisheye PRO lens, which you may remember, is one of the two new high-end lenses introduced in the M.ZUIKO PRO family. This month, it's time to put the 7–14mm f/2.8 PRO on the test bench.

Before going into the details about this lens, let's quickly take an overview as to what the PRO moniker in Olympus Micro Four Thirds lenses signifies. The PRO lenses are extremely sturdy and weather sealed. Coupled with weathersealed bodies like the OM-D E-M1 or the GH4, they are ideal for photographers looking to make pictures in extreme conditions like heavy rain or dust storms. Most of the PRO lenses boast of fast apertures, well dampened focusing rings, a push-pull focus clutch mechanism, and impressive optics.

Features

The 7–14mm f/2.8 gives a field of view similar to a 14–28mm (in 35mm parlance). Olympus have a 9–18mm wide angle lens, but this new lens is their widest rectilinear lens now. Panasonic does have a 7–14mm that we tested a few years ago, but that's f/4, and thus, not as versatile.

Ultrawide lenses on MFT sensors offer a great DOF even while using fast apertures, so don't expect to blur backgrounds much, unless you are shooting at 14mm and really close to the subject. So while there are only 7 blades in the aperture diaphragm, it shouldn't be an issue, in practical use.

What the f/2.8 is useful for, of course, is low light shooting, which is, usually the Achilles' Heel of the Micro Four Thirds system, so we see this lens being quite popular amongst street and event photographers and video shooters who need to work in low light. The minimum focusing distance (0.2m) is useful, considering the extremely wide nature of the lens.

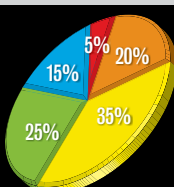
PLUS

- Image quality
- Useful close focusing distance
- Weathersealed

MINUS

- Prone to flare
- Can't use filters

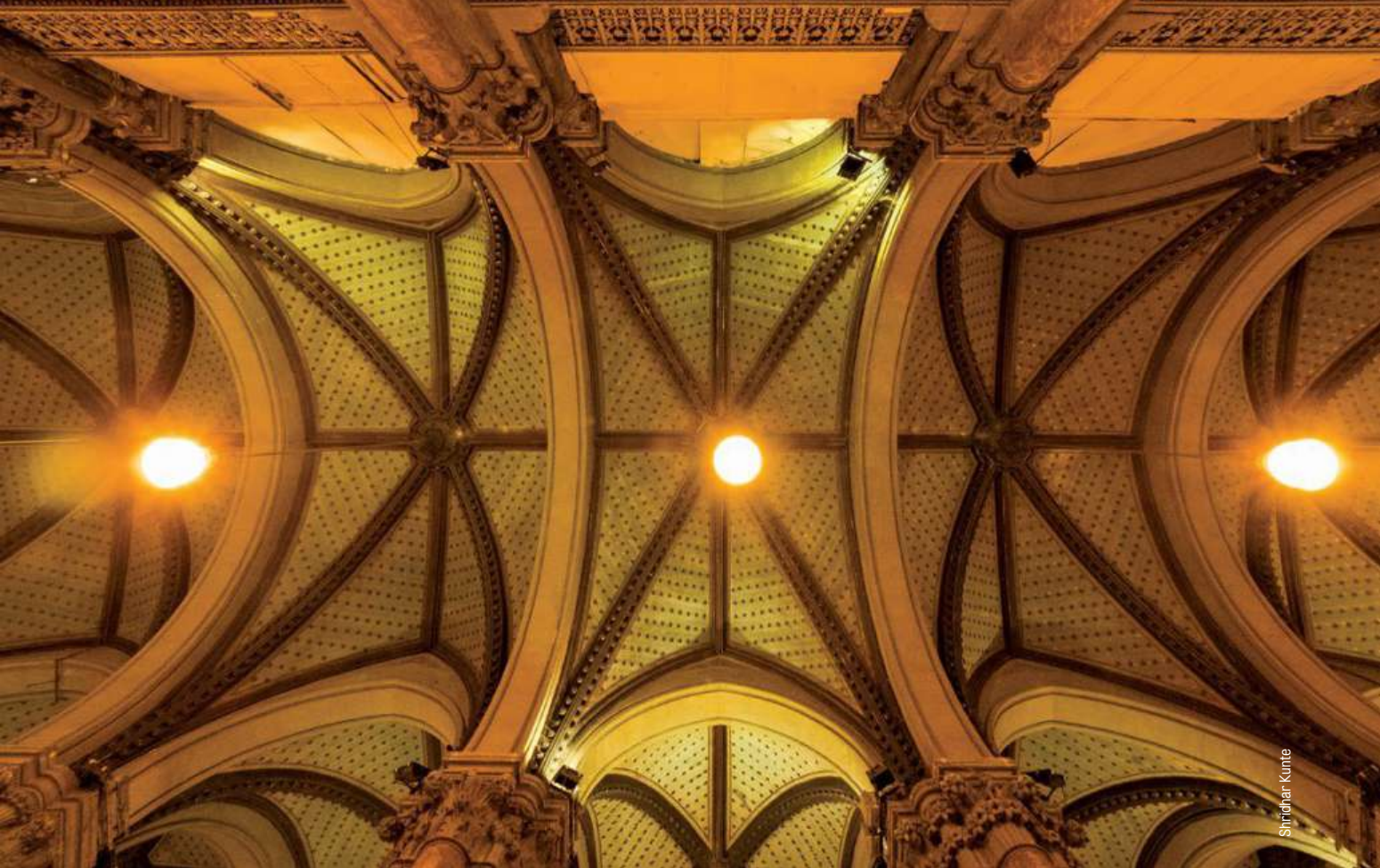
WEIGHTAGE OF PARAMETERS



- Features
- Performance
- Build Quality
- Ergonomics
- Warranty & Support

SPECIFICATIONS

Model name	Olympus M.ZUIKO DIGITAL ED 7–14mm f/2.8 PRO
MRP	Rs. 88,980
Lens construction	14 elements in 11 groups
Closest focusing distance	0.2m
Max. Magnification	0.12x
Diaphragm blades	7
Max. Aperture	f/2.8
Dimensions, Weight	78.9 x 105.8mm, 534g



Shirish Kunte

Handling

The lens is a solid block made of metal and strong polycarbonate, with a non-detachable lens hood that's a part of the structure.

The problem with this kind of design is that one cannot use any filters with the lens.

It's a constraint that we have also seen in the Nikkor 14–24mm f/2.8 full frame lens, for instance. This is unfortunate, as landscape photographers would have loved the focal length and the build and optics of this lens. The inability to use ND filters will also be a constraint for filmmakers who'd otherwise be attracted to the fast-aperture capabilities of the lens.

The lens barrel has a Fn switch that can be customised with a shooting function. The user can switch to MF at any given point of time by pulling the focusing ring inward, similar to the clutch mechanism seen in previous PRO lenses and in Tokina lenses. Sadly, there is no DOF scale. Even if the lens had DOF markings for one of the ends of the zoom, it would have been useful. The zoom ring is placed closed to the camera body and is wider than the focus ring. This is useful while shooting at slower shutter speeds.

Performance

MFT lenses are usually good performers, and most aberrations are corrected within

the camera. So, the JPEGs are usually aberration-free and so are the RAWs, if the RAW converter has been updated with the lens' profile. The 7–14mm f/2.8 exhibits super distortion control, admirable for a lens this wide. Whatever little distortion is there has a uniform footprint across the zoom range, which makes it easy to correct in post.

Sharpness is very good in the centre at f/2.8 and the corners aren't too bad. When stopped down to f/5.6, the lens is tack sharp from centre to edge. Colour fringing is well controlled, but the lens is prone to flaring, especially when shooting at 7mm, but unless the light source is directly in your frame, it won't be a problem in real-world use. There is light falloff of about 1–1.5 stops while shooting at the widest aperture.

Conclusion

The 7–14mm f/2.8 PRO is priced at Rs 88,980. The closest competitor is the Panasonic Lumix G Vario 7-14mm f/4, which is less expensive, but not available in India anymore. If the use of filters is crucial in your picturemaking, you may want to avoid this lens. But for all others who enjoy shooting with a wide angle lens, and especially for architecture photographers and street chroniclers who work in varying light conditions, this lens is well worth its price. **BB**

➔ The edge to edge sharpness of the lens at f/8, along with in-body stabilisation of the OM-D E-M1, helped shoot in light that MFT systems would usually struggle in.

Exposure: 1/25sec at f/8 (ISO 6400)

FINAL RATINGS

Features	17/20
Only f/2.8 MFT ultrawide, can't use filters	
Performance	31/35
Very low distortion, sharp, prone to flare	
Build Quality	23/25
Metal mount, weathersealing at 11 positions	
Ergonomics	11/15
Focus clutch mechanism, no DOF scale	
Warranty & Support	2/5
Limited service backup, 2 year warranty	

OVERALL 84%

Who should buy it? MFT users who shoot a lot in low light, adventure enthusiasts and architectural photographers

Why? Useful close-focus distance, optically fast and distortion is very well controlled. Landscape shooters should look elsewhere as you can't use filters.

Value for Money ★★★★★☆



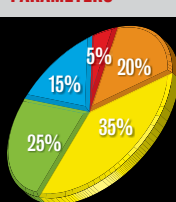
Zeiss Batis 25mm f/2

Zeiss at its Zenith

K Madhavan Pillai discovers that there is a lot more than meets the eye with the Zeiss Batis 25mm f/2, even as the company adds autofocus to a full-frame lens for the very first time.

40

WEIGHTAGE OF PARAMETERS



- Features
- Performance
- Build Quality
- Ergonomics
- Warranty & Support

Perhaps no other lensmaker in history has influenced optics as much as Zeiss. From the venerable Planar (1896, a design used for almost every 50mm prime today), Tessar (1902), Sonnar (1932), Biogon (1936), Distagon (1953), and Hologon (1966), each optical design has become legendary.

The German-made Zeiss Batis 25mm f/2 is a Distagon lens (from Latin 'distantia' or distance, and Greek 'gonia' or angle) meant exclusively for Sony's Alpha 7 series (FE mount). It is important to differentiate between lenses by Zeiss from those made by Sony under licence (and co-branded) by Zeiss. These are FE mount AF lenses made in Thailand, along with the Alpha 7 series. In fact, if there is some indirect competition for the Batis 25mm, it comes from here.

Zeiss hails the Batis line-up as 'new pro era' lenses, meant to live up to the most demanding professionals.

Features

The Batis line-up distinguishes itself from previous lenses in two ways—they are the first full-frame lenses from Zeiss Germany to have AF, and they have an OLED display instead of a conventional distance and DOF scale... the first photographic lenses in the world to have a digital display built in.

The Batis 25mm employs ten elements (two aspheric, three special glass, and two

of which have aspheric surfaces on special glass) in eight groups. The T* marking on the lens denotes the Zeiss proprietary lens coating to improve light transmission and eliminate internal reflections. The lens uses a 'floating' mechanism for its internal focusing. Minimum focusing distance (MFD) is an excellent 8 inches. The filter thread is a standard 67mm.

The 25mm is the also the first lens in the world to move away from the standard methods of calculating DOF, by taking sensor resolution *and* lens characteristics at different apertures into account. This is not mentioned anywhere in Zeiss factsheets. DOF calculation with the Sony Alpha 7R II is constrained to ensure that the zone of sharpness remains acceptably so, with the image being viewed at 100%. Given the same apertures, and depending on the camera used (from the Alpha 7 series), the Batis will display different DOF distances. For the purist, this is a huge leap forward.

The lens is all metal, mount included. The petal shaped hood is plastic though, but well made, and fits seamlessly on the barrel.

Handling

For a Zeiss, the Batis 25mm is rather light at 335g. It balances and feels good on the 7R II and feels sturdy. With a lens of this nature, a large part of the performance is dependent on handling and this in turn is linked to its

An OLED display instead of a scale

0.2m	+0.00	-0.00
ON	MF	OFF
9.2	17ft	87
7.0	14ft	∞
6.5ft	+5.68	-2.05

Continuously rotating the focus ring to the left, beyond the min. focus, shifts the display between feet and meters. Rotating right brings up the option of having the OLED turn continually on, off, or on only when the camera is in the MF mode. Focus distance, as well as near and far points of acceptable sharpness are displayed, making it easy to set hyperfocal distances. Within 6.5 feet, the OLED switches from denoting distances to showing exactly how much after and before the focus point remains sharp... an extremely thoughtful feature to build in.

PLUS

- Build quality
- Optical prowess
- Features, technology

MINUS

- Made only for Sony's Alpha 7 series of cameras



K. Vaidyanathan Pillai

design and features. The OLED, for instance, proved invaluable in many situations, especially for hyperfocal distances. Once the MF distance is set, the camera remembers it if it is switched off, and then on.

Manual focus is enabled by a reasonably wide ring encased in thick rubber. While it is not ribbed, it allows easy rotation, and it sits flush with the rest of the metal lens barrel. The ring is well-damped, and focusing is extremely precise. The steps of the 'fly-by-wire' MF ring moves focus by fractions of an inch at the MFD and progressively faster towards infinity. The Batis 25mm is also amongst the very, very few lenses where the amount of rotation required to move focus from MFD to infinity depends on the speed of rotation.

Performance

At $f/2$, the 25mm achieves exemplary razor sharpness at the centre, with the edges being

perfectly acceptable on the 42MP sensor of the 7R II. A negligible amount of highlight fringing is visible. At $f/5.6$ and $f/8$, sharpness across the frame is nothing short of superb. There is some easily corrected vignetting up to $f/5.6$. Flare is controlled, with hardly any flare caused by internal reflections, even with the sun within the edges of the frame. Unlike typical wide lenses, foreground and background bokeh is soft-edged and smooth. AF did not hunt and was as snappy as the Alpha 7R II could drive it. Distortion is very well controlled.

Conclusion

Sony has not yet released a 24mm wide angle prime. The competition, if any, comes from Sony's own Zeiss 24-70mm $f/4$ (Rs. 76,990) and the Zeiss Vario-Tessar T*16-35 $f/4$ (Rs. 84,990). Both lenses are reasonably good performers, and should be considered if focal length is the only factor. At Rs. 89,950, the Batis is more expensive, but well-priced for Zeiss Germany glass. It has two stops of advantage over both of Sony's lenses. In fact, for a purist who can use the features of the Batis, it is in a whole different league. Personally speaking, after using the lens for a few weeks on the 7R II, it is now a case of thinking of buying the camera just to have the lens. The Batis 25mm is that good! 📷

➔ Shooting into the light with a wide never felt as good as with the Batis—crisp, sharp and with good control over flare. Exposure: 1/160sec at $f/8$ (ISO 6400)

FINAL RATINGS

Features Zeiss Germany glass with AF, OLED display, DOF takes resolution into account	19/20
Performance Superbly sharp, good AF, precise MF control	33/35
Build Quality All-metal construction, weather sealing	24/25
Ergonomics Overall excellent design, MF ring characteristics, menu system in a lens!	15/15
Warranty & Support Two year warranty, limited service facilities in India	3/5

OVERALL 94%

Who should buy it? Absolutely any Sony Alpha 7 series user looking for a 24mm prime.

Why? It is uniquely paired for the Alpha 7 line-up, produces exemplary results and currently has no competition. For the purist, it is a tool unlike any lens made yet.

Value for Money ★★★★★☆

SPECIFICATIONS

Model name	Zeiss Batis 25m $f/2$
MRP	Rs. 89,950
Lens construction	10 elements in 8 groups
Closest focusing distance	0.2m, magnification of 1:5.2
Aperture blades & range	9 rounded blades, $f/2$ to $f/22$
Dimensions, Weight	92 x 81mm, 335gms



MediaPix

A New Way to Display

Supriya Joshi takes a look at the MediaPix app to see if it can potentially benefit photographers.

The internet, and social media specifically, have drastically changed the way we see, store and share photographs. The evolution of photo sharing has been astounding, more so in the context of wedding photography. These days, an increasing amount of newly wed couples prefer sharing their photographs on their social media pages rather than wait for a physical album.

Keeping this trend in consideration, Brown Box Imaging, a Mumbai-based

startup, has launched an app called MediaPix for Android and iOS devices, which allows users to view and share licensed media books with friends, family and clients.

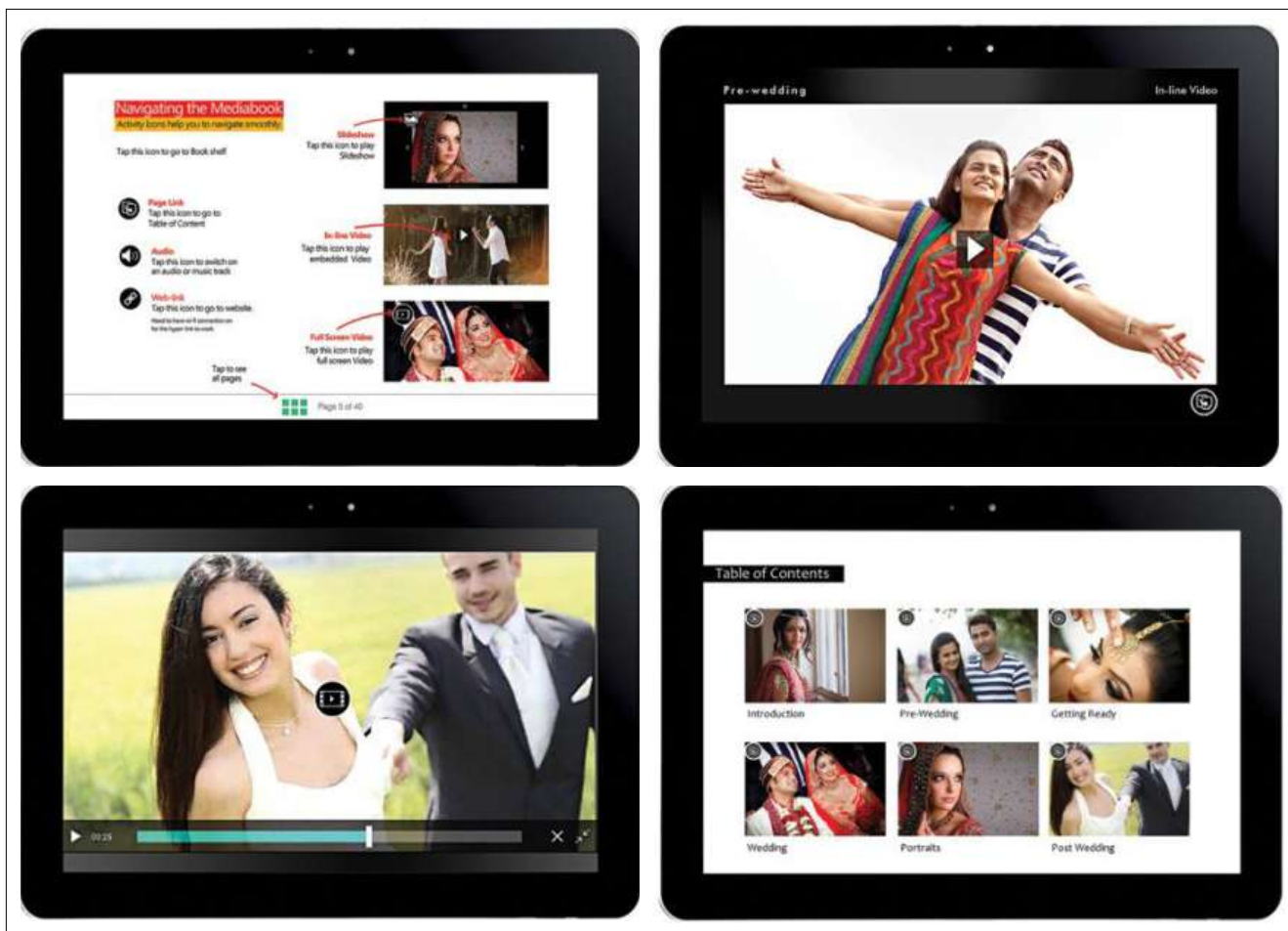
Made for Sharing

Before a book can be viewed, it must first be created. The media books can contain all the multimedia elements from a single event. This includes slideshows, photographs and video as well. While the app itself is free to download, each media book is offered in two

⬇ The album displays in full-screen and looks really good on a larger device like an iPad.

Each media book can be downloaded up to 999 devices when bought with the sharing license. The same code works for both iOS and Android devices. With the single license code, a media book can be downloaded only on one device.





➤ The app is essentially a reader for every media book you create or receive from a photographer. It is very user friendly and simple to navigate.

types of packages—M-Book LITE (Rs. 2500) and M-Book (Rs. 5000), where the former consists of only stills, and the latter consists of stills, video, audio, text and web links. These prices are exclusive of design charges, which cost an additional sum and require you to share your photos and videos with the designers at Brown Box. Alternatively, you can also create your own album designs, based on templates.

A Unique Portfolio

A Table of Contents page at the beginning leads you to the various stories within the media book. Moreover, each media book can further be shared with up to 999 devices. You can also control the amount of devices you share content with, thus ensuring exclusivity and copyright protection.

I had a chance to visit MediaPix's office to see how an album comes to life, and it is quite an interesting process. I liked the slideshow feature. In weddings, there are many similar photos of the same scene that need to be shot. With the slideshow function, similar moments are clubbed together.

The Future of Album Making?

Google Photos also allows you to create and share albums online, albeit using cloud storage. It is not as nuanced as MediaPix, and requires internet connectivity every time you view them. MediaPix has a few drawbacks—the album sizes are huge, and if your device is low on memory, you won't be able to download them. Secondly, this service is not available for desktops yet, and hence loses out on a good amount of customers who prefer looking at images on their computers. On the whole, it can be a unique selling point for wedding photographers for their potential clients. It can prove quite a valuable asset.

AT A GLANCE

SPECIFICATIONS	Apple iPad 2, iPhone 5 and above, Android 4.2 and later
WHAT WE LIKE	The all-inclusive presentation of multimedia from any event
WHAT WE DISLIKE	Huge file sizes, not available for desktops
WHY BUY IT?	It could be a potential game changer in album making

FINAL RATINGS

86%

FEATURES	Unique multimedia albums, can share with 999 people	20/25
PERFORMANCE	Prompt and quick to launch	26/30
EASE OF USE	Simple interface, easy to understand	31/35
SPEED & RESPONSIVENESS	Quick and instant	9/10

The Wildlife Photographer's Kit

Wildlife photography kits encompass so much more than we realise. **Natasha Desai** finds out what comprises the kits of four unique wildlife photographers.

Dangerous predators, tiny microbes, endangered habitats, beautiful coral reefs, high peaks, flighty birds, fragile ecosystems, ethereal aquatic creatures and so much more... the world is filled with undiscovered wonders. Wonders, that wildlife photographers strive to bring to notice for different reasons. While their reasons are fascinating, what they use to

create stunning images can provide an incredible amount of insight into how one can pursue and better one's technique when in the great outdoors.

Each photographer featured is set apart by their virtuosity and technique. What unites them, is the drive and passion for the wilderness, and a commitment to preserve and conserve, through their photographs.



Giri Cavale has an obsessive passion for nature and its pictorial documentation. He has explored some of India's most enthralling ecosystems with the simple objective to see and photograph nature in its pristine purity.

THE CAMERA TRAP KIT...

...is one that lets me photograph the animal activity, without physically getting in the way of their fragile day-to-day existence.

Use a Narrow Aperture

Since you will not be around to adjust the settings, make sure the aperture is narrow enough. This will give you enough depth to capture a sharp photograph.

Set Up the 'Trap'

The easiest way to get your trigger to fire is to set it around an animal track that is well-known. I usually look for trails, tiger and leopard tracks to figure out where you can place the trap. Which direction the animal will come from, however, is pure luck.

Adequate Memory

I find that a 64GB memory is usually enough memory. This is because you are bound to get very few shots over a considerably long period of time.



TIP 1

Soundproof Your Camera

Animals can get easily startled, even by sounds of a shutter release. This is easily prevented with soundproof housing.

TIP 2

Keep it Sturdy

Leaving your equipment out in the open is always a risk. You could use sand bags to make sure nothing tips over.

TIP 3

The Right Height

Depending on the kind of animal you want to shoot, make sure you adjust the height of your camera and lights.

TIP 4

Protect Your Gear

A hard protective case with an opening for the lens forms the ideal protection from the elements in the wild.



Vinit Tamhankar is a Mechanical Engineer by vocation and also a passionate wildlife photographer based in Mumbai. His primary interest lies in photographing birds of prey and feline species.

THE WILDLIFE ENTHUSIAST'S KIT...

...allows me to photograph a wide range of subjects. I enjoy carrying my kit with me whenever and wherever I need to travel to.

Stability and Movement

I use a gimbal head when I use the heavier lenses in my kit. It helps when I need to move the lens in any direction as it keeps the weight of the camera and lens centered effectively.

Three-legged Support

There are several inexpensive, lightweight yet sturdy options available in tripods today. The advantage of a lighter tripod is that it makes it easier to walk around with.

Different Kinds of Filters

ND and polarising filters are of exceptionally good use when it comes to being outdoors in different kinds of light. They offer a range of creative control, all one has to do is a little experimentation.

Bean Bags for More Stability

An oft-forgotten accessory, I find that a bean bag can provide increased stability when out in rough terrain. Also, no matter what lens you use, your equipment will always be stable.

Multi-purpose Raincover

Apart from protecting your camera from the elements, I find that a raincover can double up as a surreal dreamy filter for some creative outdoor photography as well!



TIP 5

Monopod Alternative

Instead of a bulkier tripod, a monopod is a lighter option and can effectively deliver similar results.

TIP 6

Camouflage Cover

When photographing birds, make sure you wear clothes that blend into your surroundings, since birds get scared easily.

TIP 7

Do Your Research

Animal behaviour can be tricky and very specific. Venturing out without proper understanding is ill advised.

TIP 8

Size Does Not Matter

It is important to make the best of the equipment you have. Don't get caught up in having bigger lenses.



Arati Kumar-Rao is a photographer and environmental journalist based out of Bangalore, India. Her work focuses on the effects of land and river use change on indigenous populations and ecology.

The Convenient Cellphone

I use cellphones along with my camera as well to document my projects. Apart from uploading the images on social media, cellphones also provide an alternative angle of view. They also come in handy when there is a need to be discreet in certain situations.

Sound Recorder

A lot of my environment and conservation work, includes the impact on indigenous human life as well. Carrying a sound recorder ensures I have conversations recorded as well as field notes and other sounds that I may come across when outdoors.

Eyes in the Sky

For obvious reasons, it is not always possible to reach certain areas outdoors. At times like this, the DJI Phantom Vision 2 drone has been my eyes when I have been unable to reach there myself.

THE PHOTOGRAPHY KIT ON THE MOVE...

...lets me pack and unpack with ease. It also needs to be inclusive of everything that I may need when covering a long-term project.

Multiple Power Packs

I sometimes have to go for a duration of time without a place to charge. This is when having enough power back up comes in handy.

Writing Material

Even though I have a cellphone, I still use a waterproof notebook to jot down anything and everything that I may need to when on the field.



iPhone6



Nikkor 14-24mm f/2.8



Nikkor 24-70mm f/2.8



Nikkor 70-200mm f/2.8 VR II



Sigma 150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM Sports Lens



Go Pro Hero 3+ Black



Camera Gimbal Stabilizer



Nikon D4



Multiple Power Packs



TASCAM sound recorder



Filters



Rite Journal Waterproof Notebook Pencils Pens



DJI Phantom Vision 2

TIP 9

Portable Readers

Instead of carrying a laptop, you could carry a self-contained card backup drive card reader to save space.

TIP 10

Flashlights and Headlamps

They are of help at night. You can also diffuse the light from these accessories for additional light in your photos.

TIP 11

Travel Smart

Carrying a heavy pack will only tire and slow you down. Carry essentials but do not forget to always be prepared.

TIP 12

Any Medium Will Do

Don't get caught up in the tools that will tell your story. Whether cellphones or cameras, use what feels best.



Sumer Verma started diving in 1997 and completely fell in love with the sea and all its creatures. He has since logged more than 6000 dives and is one of India's most experienced and accomplished diving instructors and underwater photographers.

THE ESSENTIAL UNDERWATER KIT...

...allows me to capture how beautiful the ocean really is while enjoying the stunning aquatic world around me.



Seacam housing for Canon EOS 5D MII



Dome port

Good Waterproof Housing

A camera is only as good as its housing when underwater. This is your main accessory and it is advisable to buy the best that is available for your camera.



YS 250 strobes

Proper Strobe Lighting

Positioning your strobes correctly is what will either make or break your photographs. You also need to decide how many strobes to use. Experiment with different ways of lighting, as shooting underwater is a completely different ball game. Also, the deeper you go, the less available light you will have to play with.



Strobe arms

Different Lenses

When underwater, I use a combination of wide angle and macro lenses to get the desired results. With the macro lens, I can capture the smaller details of the marine life that are usually unseen. A wide angle lens lets me convey the magnificence of the underwater world.



Canon EF 100mm f/2.8 Macro USM



Canon EF 16-35mm f/2.8L II USM



Macro port

TIP 13

Practise in a Pool

If need be, practise shooting in a swimming pool with children first, as they are constantly moving, like fish!

TIP 14

Scuba Diving

While the knowledge is not mandatory, it is easier and more comfortable if you know how to scuba dive.

TIP 15

Control Your Movement

You may distress the creatures underwater with sudden movements. It is crucial to remain calm.

TIP 16

Use Warmer Filters Too

A good way to counter the intense blues and greens when underwater is to use warm tinted filters with your lenses.



Better Cellphone Photography

ABANDONED REALITIES

João Bernardino's photos of long-forgotten urban landscapes

- Amit Mehra on the process of making a photobook
- How good is the camera of the much hyped OnePlus 2?

“At the end of the day, we are humans, all of us with our own insecurities, getting along with life.”



Does Your Personality Determine How You Shoot?

Last month, a friend of mine introduced me to the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), a test that one takes to determine their psychological preferences in terms of how they see the world and make decisions. Always up for some introspection, I quickly logged on to the website www.16personalities.com and started taking the test.

Several minutes later, my personality type was revealed to me—I am an ISFJ. In a nutshell, these are individuals who are Introverted (I), Sensing (S), Feeling (F) and Judging (J). They are warm protectors and always ready to defend those who are close to them. I won't go into the detailed analysis, but the truth was, the test results were scarily accurate, and they got me thinking about how being an ISFJ affects the way I see and make pictures.

As an introvert, I am shy about approaching people to make a photograph of them. It is something I have been working on for a bit, and I do think I have become considerably better at dealing with my anxieties. Another thought that struck a deep chord is a quote that I read recently by legendary photographer Bill Cunningham. He said, “The problem is I'm not a good photographer. To be perfectly honest, I'm too shy. Not aggressive enough. Well, I'm not aggressive at all. I just loved to see wonderfully dressed women, and I still do. That's all there is to it.”

It's just as simple as that, then, isn't it? Despite what your personality may hold you back from doing, if there's something you'd like to photograph, go ahead and photograph it. At the end of the day, we are humans, all of us with our own insecurities, getting along with life. I make it a point to keep reminding myself of this little truth every time I shoot. If nothing else, it leaves me with the warm envelope of contentment.



Supriya Joshi
supriya.j@network18publishing.com



Untitled

by João Bernardino

“I ask myself how an image will contribute to my feelings related to themes of desolation and abandonment. Instead of looking for lines or shapes, I look for mood. I ask myself what my Instagram feed, my way of seeing, conveys as a whole.”

To see João Bernardino's powerful images of urban isolation —
‘Solitude in the Abandoned’
Turn to page 56

To make nuanced black and white film simulations —
‘App Review: BLACK’
Turn to page 54

Cover photograph by
João Bernardino



I don't pretend to be an intellectual or a philosopher. I just look.

JOSEF KOUDELKA



The iconic Magnum photographer is best known for his groundbreaking portrayal of gypsies, all shot with a 25mm lens, with remarkable intimacy and empathy. His most recent panoramic landscape work, *Wall: Israeli and Palestinian Landscapes* was published in 2013.



OnePlus 2

Almost Twice the Phone

The **OnePlus 2** has been one of the most anticipated successors to hit the markets. **Natasha Desai** finds out if its camera lives up to all the hype around it.

Given the amount of buzz created around the OnePlus 2, I waited, not with baited breath but with a mix of curiosity, anticipation and a hint of scepticism for the '2016 Flagship Killer'. The phone is available by its invite and at the time of writing, over 53,00,000 invites had been snapped up. Our own review of the OnePlus One, the 'Original Flagship Killer' was pretty appreciative. Whether or not the 2 is truly better than its predecessor and will give the bigwigs a run for their money, is what I set out to discover.

⚡ **Bright, vibrant and punchy colours straight out of the phone were a joy to view on a big screen.**

What's Different?

Both the One and 2 feature 13MP rear cameras with a six lens module, a dual LED flash and can shoot at f/2. The 2 additionally, includes a laser focus for speedier autofocus and OIS. However, it has withdrawn its native RAW support. The body is a little thicker and heavier than the One, but it is still comfortable to wield, in spite of the difficulty I sometimes I have with bigger phones. The 5.5-inch Full HD LCD screen remains the same and renders crisp vibrant colours. Even in bright daylight, the screen visibility was good.

⚡ **While there have been grumbles about the camera's placement, I on the other hand, found it perfect for times when one needs to be discreet.**

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All photographs by Natasha Desai



➔ With so many mirrors around, I knew I wanted at least one of them to reflect the girl's face. The phone's surprisingly fast Burst mode made sure I got the frame I wanted.

How the Two Shoots

Things are simple in the native camera app, with HDR, Beauty mode and a Clear mode, which functions like the Interpolation mode in the Oppo Find7a. The Clear mode does give a little more depth and sharpness in the images, but it is not very significant and takes an awful amount of time to save the image. A side-swipe in the app gives Panorama, Video, Slow Motion and Time Lapse modes.

Like its predecessor, the 2 controls flare and purple fringing quite effectively. It does tend to brighten images overall and in some cases, ends up overexposing the image slightly. However, unlike the One, it comes with exposure control via a dial that can be adjusted when shooting.

What I was very impressed with was the phone's low light performance. The noise is controlled pretty well and the colours rendered are bright and fairly accurate. The dual LED flash works wonders and produces good images.

The Bane of its Existence

Laser autofocus came on the scene last year and picked up speed this year, with phones like the Rs. 9999 Asus Zenfone 2, using the technology as well. How it performs in the OP2, however, is a different story. At best, the autofocus is sluggish. In daylight, there is a fair amount of focus hunting, even though

the focus has been locked on. When subjects move in the frame, the focus will lock on, but the shutter won't always fire in time.

In low light, the autofocus would regularly get confused if there were two subjects placed at different depths and would take a good amount of time to lock on and shoot.

Is it Worth the Buzz?

The phone comes with a good build, hardware and user experience for Rs. 24,999. The camera comes close, but falls short of being truly good. Yet, I would recommend this phone as one of the better ones on the scene today. Now, if only you could get your hands on it! **BP**

AT A GLANCE

SPECIFICATIONS	64GB inbuilt memory (16GB available as well), OxygenOS based on Android 5.1, 64-bit Qualcomm Snapdragon 810 processor with 1.8GHz Octa-core CPUs, 4GB RAM, Rs. 24,999
WHAT WE LIKE	The phone as a whole, punchy colour reproduction
WHAT WE DISLIKE	Sluggish autofocus with lag, no RAW, no weathersealing
WHY BUY IT?	Overall, this is a great phone at a pretty good price, in spite of the not-so-great camera performance.

FINAL RATINGS

87%

CAMERA FEATURES	OIS, minimal options, exposure control	22/25
IMAGE QUALITY	Decent image quality, good low light performance	26/30
VIDEO QUALITY	4k, and HD video at 120fps	14/15
HANDLING	Sturdy and easy to wield in spite of bigger size	13/15
SPEED & RESPONSIVENESS	Very quick phone but AF lag	12/15

Almost Too Hot to Handle

During continuous shooting outdoors, I found that the phone tended to overheat. The metal around the phone would get hot enough for me to wonder what was going on. It did not, however, shut down. Once the phone was updated to the most recent OxygenOS, the overheating was cut down significantly, making it nothing to worry about.



Some apps are like an all-you-can-eat buffet, way too much to choose from and a tone of dressings that you're never going to taste. Then comes along an app like BLACK, which is much like a plate of sushi, minimal and with exactly the right amount of serving on a plate. Black and white photography itself is so nuanced, that an app that sticks to the basics, is quite refreshing.

Easy as it Comes

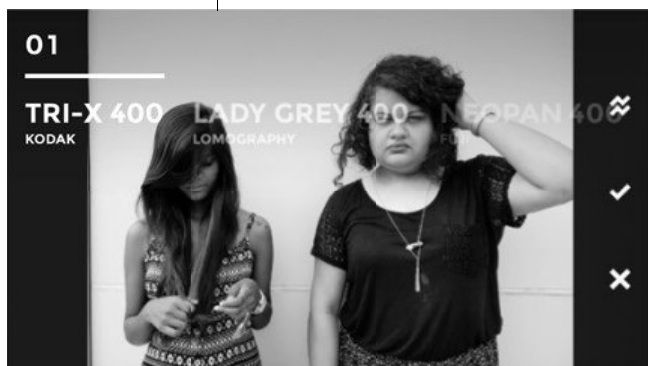
Originally designed for Windows phones, the UI is minimal and the app contains a number of presets that are black and white film emulations. You have to import photos into the library, much like VSCOCam and you can begin editing.

A Selection of Options

The ten presets, try to replicate the likes of Kodak's famous Tri-X 400, Agfa's APX 400 and even a Lomography film are quite impressive. They produce beautiful tones and render good results for images with different kinds of lighting conditions.

Once you are done selecting the preset, there are three options of Fade, Vignette and Curves, available after a further in-app

⬇️ Going through presets is as simple as swiping right and left. Another simple, yet effective way of seeing the same picture with different filters.



BLACK

Classic Blacks & Lovely Whites

The allure of black and white photographs will never die, **Natasha Desai** discovers as she tests the photo-editing iOS app **BLACK**.

COLLECTION



All photographs by Natasha Desai

purchase of Rs 60, which is honestly not too much, considering how much control these options offer. The absence of the option to add grain threw me off but I'm hoping an update will bring this in.

⬇️ Once you do save your processed images, you can view them one after the other in an album-like interface, again, simply by swiping.

The Verdict

Another thing that we have come to take for granted in most photo editing apps, is the inclusion of the options to crop, zoom, tilt, increase contrast, brightness and more. All of which are absent in BLACK. I strongly believe, however, that much like the sushi, this app keeps only the essentials on the plate to give you a more refined and unique experience. In this case, with black and white post-processing. 📷

AT A GLANCE

SPECIFICATIONS	iOS 7 or later
WHAT WE LIKE	Minimalist design, limited options
WHAT WE DISLIKE	No grain, additional editing options not free
WHY GET IT?	It produces refined, beautiful tones.

FINAL RATINGS

86%

FEATURES	10 different filters with additional fade, curves and vignette options	23/25
PERFORMANCE	Smooth swiping motion, takes a few seconds to save.	25/30
EASE OF USE	Very simple UI and minimalist design	30/35
SPEED & RESPONSIVENESS	No lag	8/10



Amit Mehra

Roznaama: The Birth of a Book



Just a few days ago, I was at a café with a friend for a late night coffee. As we left, I made a picture, one of my innumerable visual musings, accumulating within my diariesque pensieve. Curiously enough, that night, I held in one hand, my cameraphone and in the other, the result of all that the phone has seen in these past two years—a dummy copy of *Roznaama*, the book.

Why do we photograph is a question I have often asked myself. For me, it's about the sheer joy of making each picture, but then, today, in an era where memories are only clogging up virtual memory, as a photographer, I yearn to see his work in a tangible form. A few months into making images on my cellphone, I realised, somewhere at the back of my mind, that in here, lies a photobook.

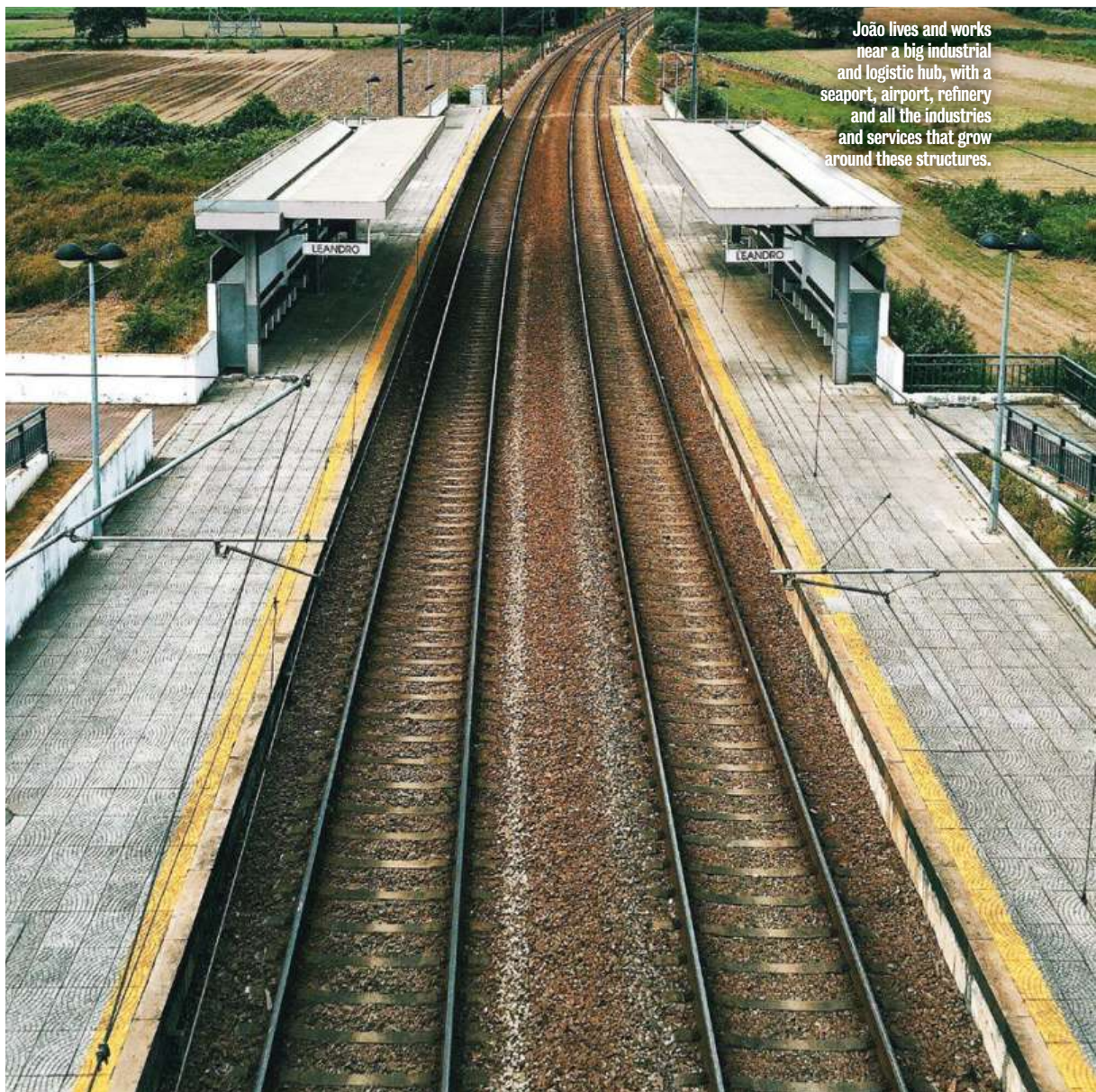
In a strange sort of way, this column has been a testing board for my book. I share an image every month, you, the readers, respond. With likes, dislikes, shared stories and experiences, the column becomes a sounding board for ideas. There were photos that were a part of the column, but haven't made it to the book, and others that have sneaked in, surprising me. It's fascinating to look back at the process, at the joy of shooting every single image, the patterns and associations that one starts seeing in them, editing them, sequencing them, playing with them, and seeing the genesis of a visual narrative. *Roznaama* has taken me here, to this page spread above, one of the spreads from my final book, to be launched next month. It's a little like watching something being born. ■

Constantly balancing the worlds of commercial and documentary photography, Amit describes himself saying, "I'm like an octopus who likes to deal with different things at the same time. You can call me a schizophrenic photographer." The moments in this monthly diary are excerpts from his ongoing work titled 'Roznaama'.



João Bernardino

- He is a designer, illustrator and a professor.
- A lot of his work is inspired by avantgarde art and design movements like constructivism and futurism.
- He is currently working on a photobook based on Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa's futuristic poem titled *Triumphal Ode*, which celebrates the role of industry, machine and progress.



João lives and works near a big industrial and logistic hub, with a seaport, airport, refinery and all the industries and services that grow around these structures.

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Solitude in the Abandoned

João Bernardino is obsessed with shooting construction sites and deserted buildings. Conchita Fernandes finds out what fuels this compulsion.

How do you envision a post-apocalyptic world? Is there a grand fire raging in the distance, with death and destruction looming in its proximity?

Or is it a world completely devoid of human presence?

When Rick Grimes, the main protagonist in *The Walking Dead* TV series, sets out in his car into the unknown, he encounters the latter. Instead of devastation, he finds

himself in the midst of extreme isolation.

But even in this seclusion, the viewer cannot help but feel the intense serenity and beauty that exists in the silence of the abandoned landscapes that he passes by.

It was this exact feeling that arose within me when I happened to chance upon João Bernardino's photographs. The air of stillness and emptiness that enveloped the desolate countryside and structures was what drew me to his work. It also sparked

FIND JOÃO HERE!

- Instagram: @joao.bernardino

INSTAFOLLOW NOW

18-year-old Remo Jacobs (@livingitrural) has grown up with Scottish Highland Cattle, a subject that he is very fond of photographing. Moreover, he also gives his viewers a glimpse into what it means to become one with nature.

my curiosity about the photographer's choice of subject.

The Deeper Meaning

João's deep-rooted interest in industrial landscape photography was a passion that developed as a result of different influences and ideas. On one hand, it involved the interaction of various art forms like comics, animation and cinema. "I was very inspired by the post-apocalyptic themes by comic book artists like Jean Giraud and Enki Bilal, and movies like Mad Max."



➡ When composing his photographs, João is mindful about avoiding distractions, in order to maintain a simplistic look in his final image. "I like to keep my subjects arid and deserted," he says.

On the other hand, it was a reflection on how far we have come in terms of technology, and the ease with which

Most of his photographs are shot at Matosinhos, a city that he calls home, in Portugal. The images are mainly from this area.





Playing with Spaces in Urban Environments

- **Infusing Light with Shadow:** The play of light and shadow is important in terms of drawing out the different characteristics of the subject.
- **Using Lines Efficiently:** The combination of strong lines at opposing and unequal angles can add drama to an otherwise unappealing scene.
- **Creating a Different Perception:** Sometimes, only by isolating a single important feature, will allow the viewer to perceive your subject differently.

we can abandon things and move on. One instance he gives is how we as a society have transitioned from the industrial to the internet age. “Industries have been gradually moving away to the outskirts of cities and setting up base in secluded spots. This wasn’t the case 20 or 30 years ago. But as this happened, people took

to celebrating newer and ‘softer’ forms of progress and development—internet.”

Stepping into the Photograph

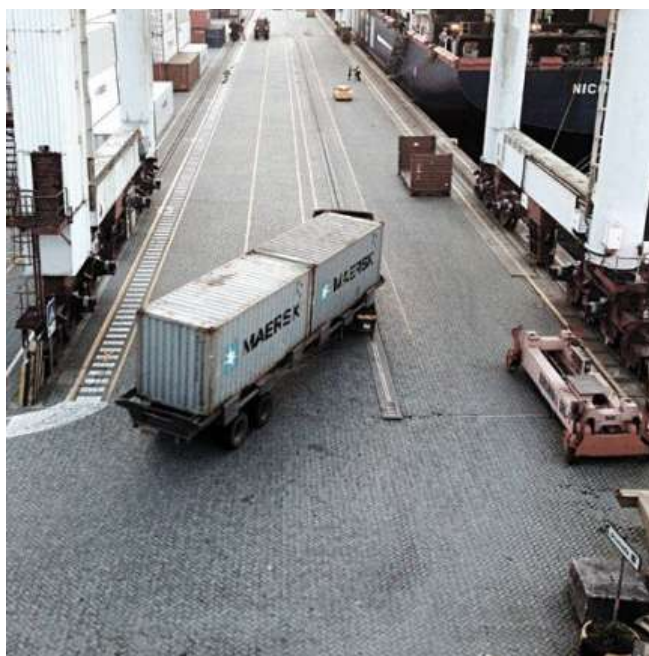
But unlike most industrial landscape photography, where the focus is on the strength and the magnanimity of the structure, João’s photographs are of a much quieter nature. While his images do show scale and size, but they are not intended to shock you. Instead, they make you question the image. “When shooting abandoned mills, I often think a lot about the people who worked there. Several questions about their whereabouts spring up in my head. I find that sometimes I am able to convey ▶

⌚ He talks about how perseverance is key to his work. Before he makes the picture, he ensures that he gets the lighting right. If this means visiting the area a day before, to see the effects of light at different hours of the day, he will do it.

“I was born two years before the revolution that brought democracy to Portugal, after a 42-year-long dictatorship. So I grew up in the middle of a very politically agitated period where the construction of a new society was a central issue. I guess this is why I make the kind of images that I do.”



⌚ Patterns and minimalist compositions are hallmarks of João’s work. He refers to it as “losing the global look.”



➡ Throughout his feed, he has maintained a constant palette of colours, mostly faded browns and blues. Sometimes they do invoke a nostalgic feel, especially his landscapes, which are quite reminiscent of the old American West.

these emotions in my images, and at other times I am not. This is when I use my words.”

Looking at the Larger Picture

Another aspect that you immediately notice in João's work is the way he has incorporated line and shapes in

his photographs. However, this is not something that he consciously seeks out to depict.

“A lot of photographs on Instagram focuses on these elements, which I think is great. But does it move me? No, no really. These details are not central to my work.

➡ In an interview with Instagram, João explains the reason behind spending hours photographing concrete and metal structures. He mentions, “I think I am capturing a neglected part of our recent history, a less trendy one, a more dusty one.”



➡ When asked about his postprocessing preferences, he feels that he sometimes over edits his photographs. “Most of the time I end up using more than one filter to a single shot.”



➦ Many of the structures that I photograph are off-limits or are functional facilities not open to the public. In times like this, I try to see how close I can get to the building. Usually, I always end up finding interesting subjects to shoot.

Instead, I find myself looking at the larger picture, and what my feed conveys on the whole. I also ask myself how a particular image will contribute to my thoughts and feelings related to themes of desolation and abandonment. In a way, I am working on the subject and not in the formal composition of elements."

The Road Ahead

While there are a thousand stories to be told in each of these forsaken places, what do they all symbolise collectively? While João's

portrayal of our shift from the industrial to the internet age is apparent in his work, there is also a mounting environmental concern. As more of these concrete and metallic structures fall silent with time, what sort of implications will this have on the land in the long run?

My only respite to these questions is his image of a lone car parked on a deserted road, amidst a vast expanse of brown shrubby land. Even in its solitude, there is a sense of hope that prevails in the scene, that somehow we will figure our way out. ■

READERS' GALLERY

Better Cellphone Photography's readers were challenged to make interesting photographs of the different kinds of waterscapes around them.

Winner

Stairway to Heaven

Gagan Brar, Gurgaon

What made me shoot this:

The reflection to the staircase extending into nothingness painted a very surreal picture in my head.

What I learnt:

A slight enhancement in colours can change a bright scene to an otherworldly one.

Shot with: Apple iPhone 4S



Honourable Mention



Gliding Along

Shreyans Shrishrimal,
Payali

What made me shoot this:

The early morning light coupled with the way the oar was cutting through the water stirred a sense of peace in me.

What I learnt: Adding a bit of a fade while processing can enhance the mood.

Shot with: Samsung Galaxy S4

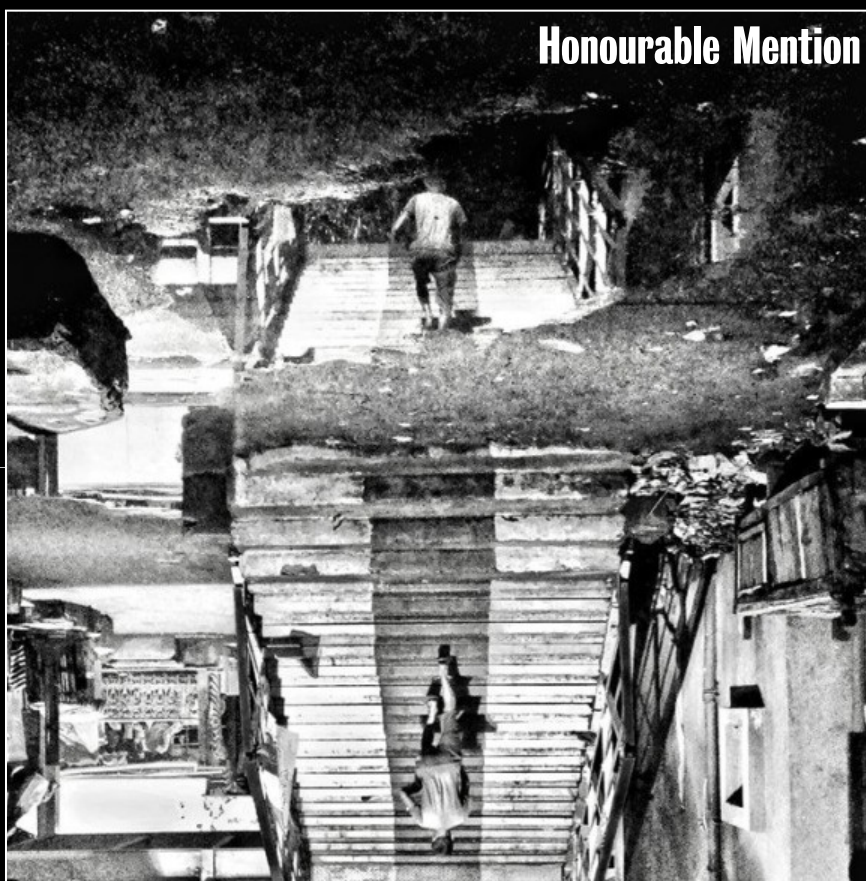
To be featured on these pages, participate in our contests by logging on to betterphotography.in/contests and win exciting prizes!

Seeing Double Shubhajit Kundu, Kolkata

What made me shoot this: I felt as though the world in the reflection is a parallel universe to the one we live in.

What I learnt: Everyday routes can be made interesting with one simple addition to it. In this case, the man climbing up the stairs made the frame.

Shot with: Motorola Moto X



Honourable Mention

Honourable Mention

Fade to Black

Ancel Joseph, Chennai

What made me shoot this: As my flight landed over Chennai, I noticed how the sea and the land seemed to merge with the horizon.

What I learnt: You can use the Rule of Thirds for tones and not just composition when shooting an image.

Shot with: Xiaomi Mi3



18 PHOTOGRAPHERS SHARE THEIR INCREDIBLE STORIES ON NATURE AND WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY

66

So much of the world continues to remain unseen and unexplored.

Photographers go to extreme lengths to bring us a slice of these uncharted territories, oftentimes risking their lives in the process. So why do they do this?

For some, it's the idea of conservation, that our planet is fragile, and a lot of these places, environments and its inhabitants are fast disappearing. For others, it's about preserving a glimpse of our wondrous world, for future generations.

There will always be sanctity in these reasons.

Yet, how often do we view photographs that fill us with awe, shock us, thrill us, or amuse us, and forget that we also play a part in the cohesive ecological whole, and are not separate from the wild? In the end, all it takes for the human species to cease to exist, is a few degrees of climate change.

The wild will go on, survive and thrive, well after we have gone.

There are no better reminders of this than the images you see in the pages ahead.

Conchita Fernandes introduces you to the stories behind them, and the photographers who captured these truly incredible places and moments.

ON ASSIGNMENT

Their Crowning Glory

Making portraits of dogs with a slight twist

90



Q&A

How to

Avoid vibration while shooting a long exposure

98



Rodrigo Friscione Wyssmann

Rodrigo comes from a family where diving is not only a ritual, but also a business. He was initially drawn to freediving and spearfishing, and later got interested in underwater photography.

“The act of making a portrait of this captured shark felt incredibly compelling. It almost dignified, for me, the passing of one of the most powerful predators of the ocean.”

A group of friends and I had set out to photograph Striped Marlins, off the Pacific side of the Baja California Peninsula in Mexico. We stumbled upon a shark fishing operation that employed the longline fishing technique. We noticed that one of the catch was a young Great White Shark. Its ripped jaw was proof enough of the fight that it had put up. Due to the disturbing nature of the image, I converted it to B&W.

Camera: Nikon D300

Lens: Sigma 15mm f/2.8 EX DG Diagonal Fisheye

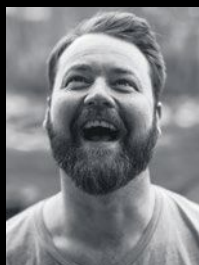
Exposure: 1/125sec at f/8, ISO 200

TIP 1

The Benefits of a Strobe

If you want to explore the depths of the deep seas, aside from a secure, ergonomic housing, a strobe is a must. It not only freezes movement and reduces backscatter, but strobes with lower colour temperature (4700K) can also enhance blues.





Gavin Leane

A resident of Dublin, Gavin teaches young adults with special needs and challenging behaviour. In his spare time, he enjoys photography, but does not believe in restricting himself to any particular genre.

“How do you know that you have left your mark behind in this world? This scene made me question if we are truly mortal.”

It was sometime in February... I was walking along the Dublin coast, when I came across a dead fox. It appeared to have passed away naturally, a unique occurrence in an area infamous for roadkill. I shot a few photographs of the deceased animal and then headed home. Later that night, it snowed. My thoughts instantly drifted to the fox, and pictured the form it would take when covered with snow. The next day, I went back to the spot, and as I had imagined, the fox was covered with a shroud of snow. Aside from looking peaceful, the sight reminded me of the coldness of death and the vulnerability of the wild.

Camera: Canon EOS 5D

Lens: Canon EF 50mm f/1.4 USM

Exposure: 1/1600sec at f/1.4, ISO 125

TIP 2

One Camera, One Lens, One Vision

A lot of beginners feel the need to own several lenses, without mastering the essence of any. With nature and wildlife, the temptations of using an extreme focal length (super telephoto or ultrawide) are difficult to resist. Use a fixed lens, maybe a 35mm or an 85mm. These are focal lengths that reduce drama, and thus, challenge you to see differently.



Simone Sbaraglia

Most of his work concentrates on endangered species and ecosystems. When he isn't travelling to the ends of the earth, Simone teaches photography, and conducts workshops and photo tours.

"Gaining an animal's trust is laborious, but it's probably the most crucial part of wildlife imagemaking. That said, I did encounter some territorial males, who tried to scare me off when I got too close."

Geladas are native to the Simien plateau in Ethiopia. They nest on steep cliffs to seek refuge from predators. I was tracking one such group for three weeks. One day, an hour before sunset, I set up at the edge of a cliff where I knew they'd return after the day's foraging. They arrived on cue, and disappeared over the cliff to find a safe spot to sleep. High ISO, a gentle pulse of flash and I just had to lean over.

Camera: Nikon D800

Lens: Nikkor AF-S 70–200mm f/2.8G ED VR II

Exposure: 1/125sec at f/13, ISO 6400

TIP 3

Up Close and Personal

Robert Capa's advice, "if your pictures are not good enough, you are not close enough," stands true to wildlife photography as well. So instead of getting overtly dependent on a telephoto for reach, get on your feet and start walking!





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Rajendra Dhage

A wedding photographer by profession, Rajendra is based in Wai. He is extremely fond of bird photography and spends several hours doing so. He wishes to photograph the birds of Costa Rica some day.

“Kingfishers are swift and territorial, and are often found patrolling their side of the river. Only a vigilant eye will land you your shot.”

The Kingfisher is a commonly found bird in my hometown. I wanted to make a photograph showcasing the agility and speediness of the bird. I shot a lot that day, but every attempt seemed futile. Eventually, I even found myself waist deep in muck, while I was pursuing the bird. However, some time in the evening, I finally got my shot as the bird came swooping down to grab its meal from the river body. The light was low and my equipment basic, but the moment is often everything.

Camera: Nikon D90

Lens: Nikkor AF-S VR Zoom 70–300mm f/4.5–5.6G IF-ED

Exposure: 1/500sec at f/4.8, ISO 1200

TIP 4

Environment Comes First

Unfortunately, a lot of wildlife photographers have inadvertently been responsible for destroying the natural habitat of animals. The pursuit of the perfect shot is unending, but never at the compromise of the environment. Photographing a bird's nest is an absolute no-no, and respect the rules of any sanctuary you visit.



Bajju Patil

A resident of Aurangabad, Bajju has been actively photographing wildlife for the last 18 years. He recently launched his book *Wildscape* at the Raj Bhavan in Mumbai. Over the years, he has received several awards, like the Vir Bhagat Singh Award, Wild Maharashtra Photographer of the Year and many more.

“It’s rare to get lizards in action. Unwavering attention and dexterity complemented my years of research.”

I’ve spent the last three years studying and documenting the behaviour of the Fan-throated Lizard. They are magnificent creatures who are approachable, but only after you have gained their trust. However, developing this close-knit relationship took time and effort. One factor that helped was the donning of the same camouflaged attire, day in and day out. And I’d move just a few inches at a time, after several minutes, even hours. Gaining their trust allowed me to get incredibly close, sometimes my lens being just a few centimetres from their face. This image was a result of the encroachment of one lizard over the territory of another. They move rapidly, so it was a very satisfying photograph.

Camera: Nikon D700

Lens: Nikkor AF Micro 60mm f/2.8D

Exposure: 1/4000sec at f/4, ISO 800

TIP 5

Conveying Personality

Move beyond standard documentation. Ask yourself what makes this particular animal different. Maybe it possesses a certain trait that is unique. Then, look for frames and moments that highlight this defining characteristic.



**Jassen Todorov**

He is a musician, pilot, and photographer, with a keen interest in aerial photography. A lot of his work is inspired by the renowned German musician and composer, Johann Sebastian Bach. He says that he is equally passionate about music, flying, and photography. "When organised, I can do all three in one day!"

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TIP 6**When Shooting From the Air**

Most people shooting from an airplane make the mistake of resting their elbows on the aircraft's window or seat. The resulting vibration will reflect in your photographs.

Also, you don't have to use a high shutter speed to shoot. If the landscape is far away, you can get away with a shutter speed as low as 1/8 sec, as long as the air is calm.

“My first eight years of flying, I didn’t dare take photos. It’s not so easy to fly and take photos at the same time.”

The Grand Prismatic Spring is the largest hot water spring in the United States. At sunrise, steam emerges from its depth, thus adding to its kaleidoscopic look. I was 11,000 feet above, battling turbulent winds, encircling the area for an hour, searching for the right vantage point. But, winds in excess of 50 miles per hour from the west prevented me from maintaining a constant altitude. Nevertheless, after spending about an hour circling the area, I managed to capture this mesmerising shot. It reminded me of the human eye.

Camera: Canon EOS 6D

Lens: Canon EF 70–200mm f/4L IS USM

Exposure: 1/400sec at f/5, ISO 100



Hans Strand

After a nine-year career in Mechanical Engineering, Hans decided to make a dramatic change and devote his life to landscape photography. He was the recipient of the Hasselblad Masters Award in 2008. He has also published five books on landscape photography, the latest being *Iceland Above and Below*.

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TIP 7

Know Your Photo History

When traveling to a new place, study the work of other photographers who have documented the same region. Not only will this serve as visual research in terms of ideas and possibilities, you can consciously make an effort to not ape what's been done before.



“This was one of the last shots I managed to make, before motion sickness got the better of me.”

I have always been drawn to nature's untamed and constantly evolving landscapes. Iceland's Fúlakvisl river is one such gem.

The crisscrossing of the grey-silver tendrils on the surface of the black volcanic soil, for me, was reminiscent of the earth's creation. I also deliberately gave the image a vertical crop, so as to emphasise the continuing long elongated patterns of the delta.

Camera: Hasselblad H3DII-50

Lens: Hasselblad HC 80mm f/2.8

Exposure: 1/800sec at f/4.8, ISO 200



Alexey Trofimov

He is a landscape photographer and ardent traveller, who began his photographic journey in 2009. A recipient of several awards, Alexey strives to embody the spirit of a region in his landscape work. He is also deeply passionate about nature conservation.

“Why do we photograph? I asked myself, as I made this image, a reminder of the fragility of earth.”

Lake Baikal in Russia is the deepest freshwater lake in the world. I was visiting the area, when I noticed deep cracks on the surface of the ice. It appeared as if the ground would split further. In order to project the dramatic nature of the phenomenon, I waited for the sun to rise, and then photographed the scene. Later, I learnt that the crack was caused by the varying temperatures, which made the ice rapidly expand and contract.

Camera: Canon EOS 60D

Lens: Tamron SP AF 10–24mm f/3.5–4.5 DI II

Exposure: 1/60sec at f/11, ISO 250

TIP 8

Simplicity is of Essence

Most people associate landscape photography with wide vistas that show grandeur. Have you ever considered photographing a simple landscape? Or maybe, an intimate landscape? Or perhaps, an unconventional point of view? Have an open mind and keep walking.



**Adriano Morettin**

Twenty years ago, he picked up a camera and was initiated into the world of underwater photography. This passion has allowed him to dive into different waters across the globe, where he continues to make breathtaking images of the world below.



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TIP 9**Understanding Colours in the Ocean's Depth**

At various depths, water absorbs different wavelengths of light. For instance, red is the first colour to disappear at a depth of 15 feet. This is followed by the disappearance of orange, yellow and green at 25 feet, 35–45 feet and 70–75 feet, respectively. Here's when you need to previsualise the palette of your photo and use your strobe to modify it accordingly.



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“This photo was 15 years in the making. That’s how long back the idea was born... it stayed with me all this while.”

Every time I would dive into the waters in front of the Miramare Castle in Italy, I would always imagine photographing the jellyfish with the castle in the background. Luckily, the opportunity arrived last summer, when a swarm of barrel and fried egg jellyfish visited the area. But the picture did not come easy, as I had to patiently wait for the two jellyfish to touch near the surface of the water. Besides chasing them and enduring several stings, I had to find the right exposure in order to convey the subtle lighting of the castle in the background and the jellyfish in the foreground.

Camera: Nikon D800E

Lens: Sigma 15mm f/2.8 EX DG Diagonal Fisheye

Exposure: 1/160sec at f/18, ISO 100

**Denis Budkov**

As far as he can remember, Denis has always been interested and involved in the tourism industry, in his hometown in Russia. This was also what got him into photography. According to him, he couldn't remain indifferent to the beautiful environment around him and so, started using his camera to show people this beauty.

“It is interesting to see how docile the volcano appears in the photograph. Two days before the image was shot, it was an angry magma-spewing machine.”

I shot this photograph back in 2010, when I had conducted a photo tour at the Kamchatka Peninsula in Russia. The peninsula is also home to the Klyuchevskaya Sopka mountain, the highest active volcano in Eurasia. The group that I was with was aware of the active nature of the volcano, but we were not prepared for the spectacular sight that we would encounter. The volcano announced its arrival with a massive roar that emerged from its depth, followed by a massive spurt of magma. I still cannot believe that I witnessed it.

Camera: Canon EOS 500D
Lens: Canon EF-S 18–55mm f/3.5–5.6 IS II
Exposure: 20sec at f/8, ISO 100

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TIP 10

Being Mindful of Haze

If you're in close vicinity to an active volcano, the amount of cloudy air generated by the eruption causes haze. Similar haze may be seen in forested areas and near foggy landscapes. The haze may affect sharpness in some of the frames, so remember to take a lot of photos and keep the lens as clean as possible.



Dr Mohammed Ali Alkandari

When he is not teaching, Mohammed focuses his attention on wildlife photography and humanitarian photography projects. He is the recipient of more than 120 international awards.

“The appeal of the wild lies in its unpredictability. You have to trust yourself and think on your feet.”

The Masai Mara Reserve in Kenya is one of my favourite places to photograph wildlife. On a recent trip, I encountered a large herd of wildebeest. It so happened that while I was busy photographing them, I noticed one particular wildebeest who had stopped dead in its path. Not wanting to lose the moment, I decided to break all convention and shoot using a slow shutter speed, to convey the movement in the image.

Camera: Canon EOS-1D X

Lens: Canon EF 500mm f/4L IS USM

Exposure: 1/6sec at f/11, ISO 2000

TIP 11

Letting the Animal Dictate the Interaction

When you're shooting wildlife, ensure that when you come face to face with an animal, don't ever approach them directly or stare them in the eye. This is a confrontational move, and they will automatically perceive you as a threat. Instead, be patient and let them get comfortable in your presence and come to you.





Raviprakash S S

A software engineer by profession, Raviprakash's passion was born because of the plethora of subjects in his immediate surroundings, which inspired him to take up macro photography. He is greatly inspired by the unique vision of nature photographer Ganesh H Shankar. He won the *Amphibians and Reptiles* category in the Natural History Museum's Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2014 contest.

“The most outstanding subjects may be slithering in your backyard. Inspiration is always all around.”

One day, I discovered a Green Vine Snake in my garden. With the prior knowledge that they spend a considerable amount of time in a single place, I shot a few pictures from different angles. The snake wasn't bothered by my slow and calculated movements.

However, I was keen on capturing the reptile's yellow jewelled eyes, for which I looked for an over-the-shoulder vantage point, which even highlighted its graceful curves.

Camera: Nikon D5000

Lens: Nikkor AF-S DX Micro 85mm f/3.5G ED VR

Exposure: 1/400sec at f/6.3, ISO 200

TIP 12

The Importance of Writing

The greatest of wildlife photographers have almost always been chroniclers, who have maintained detailed journals. Take regular notes of your various encounters with the wild and study them.



Erlend Haarberg

A professional for almost two and a half decades, Erlend focuses primarily on birds and mammals. He has been extensively published in *National Geographic*, *BBC Wildlife Magazine* and *Terre Sauvage—Vivre la Nature*, amongst many other publications.

TIP 13

Observe the 3 Ps

Patience, perseverance and passion are the three prime qualities central to nature and wildlife photography. The absence of any one of these will affect the quality of your photograph. The three Ps must be then backed up by the three Ts, technique, timing and a lot of trial and error.

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“I wanted three elements—a high tide, so that the birds would be corralled up the shore; waves big enough to create a graphic pattern; and early morning or late afternoon light, so I could use a slow shutter speed.”

In spring, thousands of red knots make a stopover in Iceland, before continuing their journey to their breeding grounds in Canada and Greenland. The seven days that I spent on a cliff at the Snæfellsnes peninsula, I kept observing the frenzied feeding flock below, as they scurried to and fro from the powerful crashing waves. What enthralled me to persevere for the photograph, was the combination of the resilience of the birds and the power of the sea. I experimented with different shutter speeds and perspectives, each time struggling to keep my tripod from blowing over.

Camera: Nikon D700**Lens:** Nikkor AF-S 24–70mm f/2.8G ED**Exposure:** 1.6sec at f/7.1, ISO 400



Jan van der Greef

An innovative scientist and a passionate nature photographer, Jan's work encompasses figurative, impressionistic and abstract perspectives. A recipient of several awards, he has recently released a new book titled *Reflections of the Inner Self. Dreams and Visions of Nature*.

"In the animal kingdom, the smallest creatures are usually the most feisty ones."

TIP 14

Observe First

Hummingbirds are quick and require your undivided attention. This is why you should observe their behaviour and make detailed studies. For instance, Traplining Hummingbirds have a fixed flight plan and feeding pattern. Once you learn their schedule, you can plan your shoot accordingly, without missing a shot.

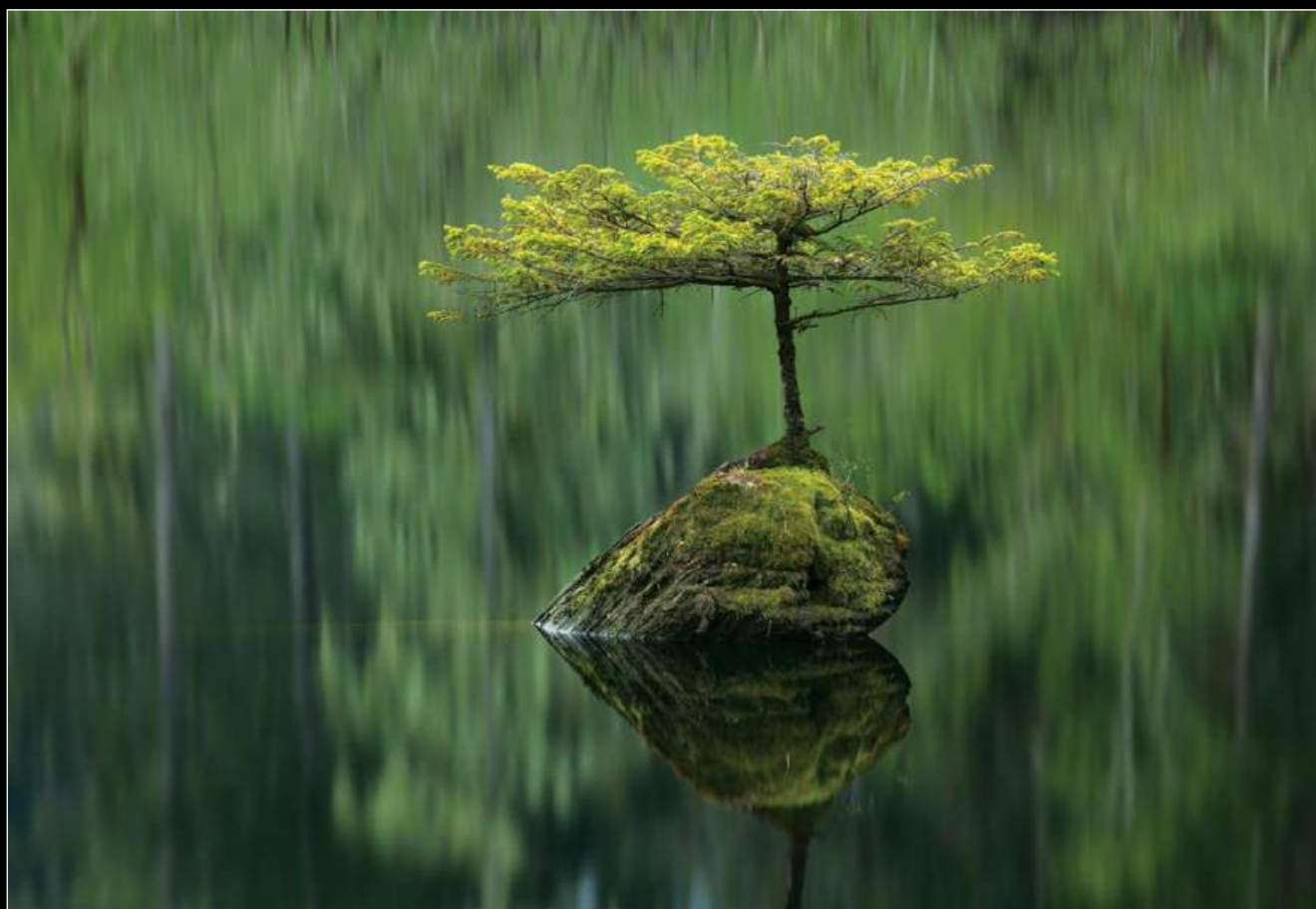
During a trip to Ecuador, at a place close to where I was staying, Red Angel Trumpet flowers were in plentiful. Their nectar also happens to be popular amongst hummingbirds. This particular area, however, was guarded by a territorial Collared Inca Hummingbird, who would chase away the visiting Sword-billed Hummingbird. Despite this, the latter would always put up a strong fight, and it was this duel that fascinated me. After using an elaborate flash setup, I spent two days, waiting for the right moment, and eventually, froze this one in time.

Camera: Canon EOS-1D Mark IV

Lens: Canon EF 300mm f/2.8L IS II USM

Exposure: 1/250sec at f/16, ISO 400





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Adam Gibbs

A professional photographer since 1991, his work has been used extensively worldwide, both as fine art and within commercial applications. He has been featured in publications like *Outdoor Photographer*, *Canadian Geographic* and BBC's *Planet Earth* book, to name a few.

“Nature works in mysterious ways, where the end of one life often leads to the beginning of another.”

As I was passing by Fairy Lake, located at Port Renfrew, on the west coast of Canada's Vancouver Island, I noticed an extraordinary sight. In an area where logging is widespread, the sight of a miniature Douglas fir tree growing out of a previous stump, right in the middle of a lake, seemed quite magical. It made me think about the tenacious existence of nature, and how its organisms thrive in the most unlikely of situations. I couldn't let go of the sight without making a picture.

Camera: Canon EOS 5D Mark II

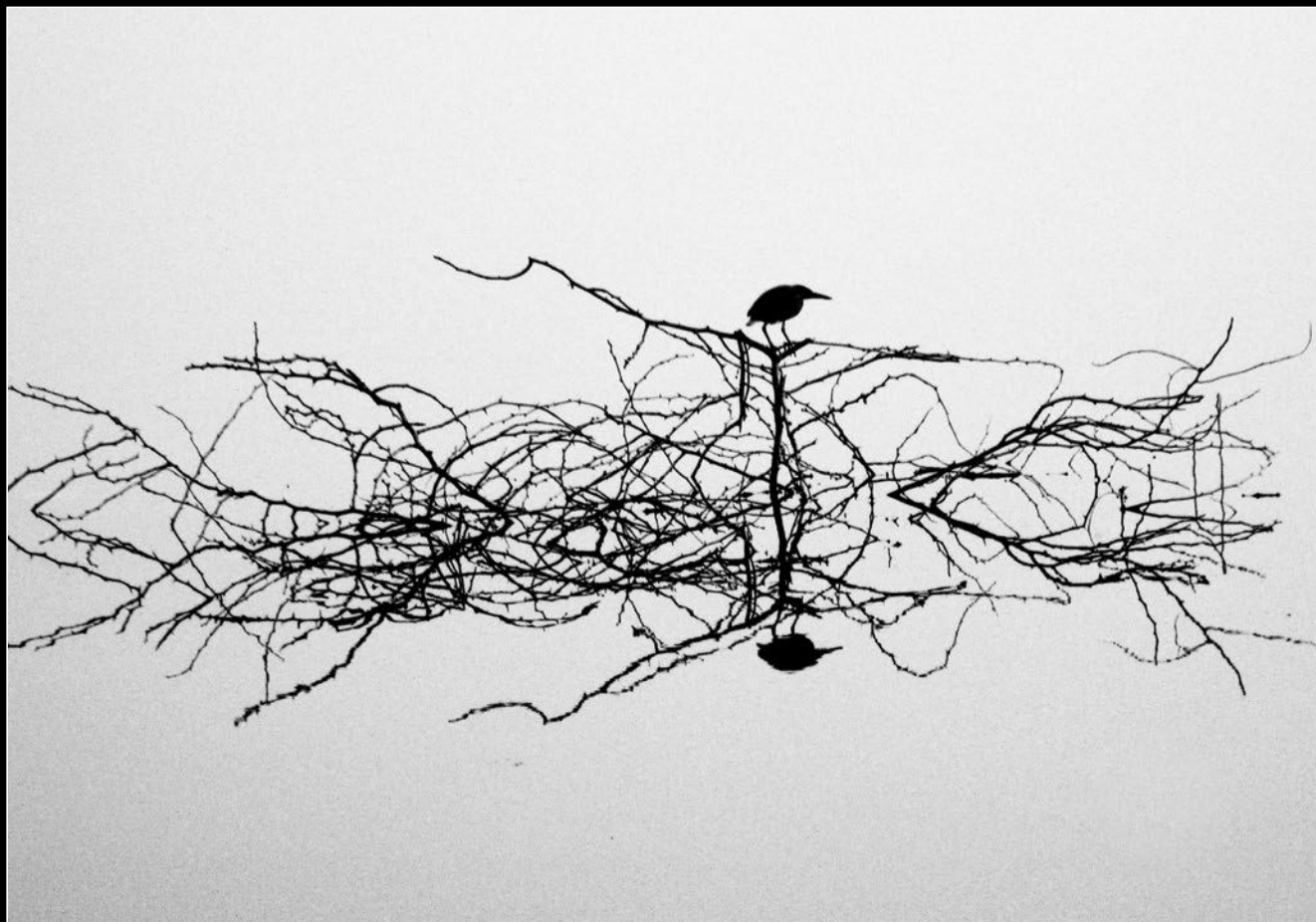
Lens: Canon EF 100–400mm f/4.5–5.6L IS USM

Exposure: 20sec at f/22, ISO 50

TIP 15

Showing Scale

If your subject is of an indeterminate size, like a mountain or a large water body, you can give your viewer a sense of scale by including a subject of a known size, such as people or animals. This allows them to comprehend the magnitude of various elements.



Supriyo Sarkar

He is a self-taught photographer who began his journey as a hobbyist using a prosumer camera. He has received a lot of recognition for his work from platforms like Nikon India, *National Geographic Traveller India* and others.

“Nature is filled with subjects that possess a graphical or abstract nature. They are found everywhere. It all depends on how we look at them.”

The photograph was shot at Joychandi Pahar in West Bengal, and is a popular destination for rock climbing enthusiasts. The area also harbours several small lakes. It was at one of these lakes where

I noticed peculiar tree branches magically emerging from the water. It so happened that a bird swooped in right at that moment and settled on one of the branches. The water was very still, which in turn, created a crisp reflection. The stillness that surrounded the entire scene prompted me to make the image.

Camera: Sony Cyber-shot DSC-H50
Exposure: 1/160sec at f/8, ISO 100

TIP 16

Know Where to Focus

While shooting reflections, you must focus on just the surface of the water. There will be some out-of-focus elements that will emphasise colours. That said, some of the most outstanding reflections are sharp throughout, needing a careful choice of aperture.



Subrata Bal

A banker by profession, Subrata's love for travel photography has led to the publication of his images in a wide variety of magazines. He was the *Natural Patterns* category winner in the Better Photography Photographer of the Year 2008 award.

"I felt like the desert was putting up a little performance for me, as it appeared to be dancing in the rays of the sun."

When I arrived, it was a warm afternoon in the Hunder Sand dunes, at the Nubra Valley in Ladakh. It was also my first trip to the place, and I was thrilled by the stunning landscape before me. I noticed how the rays of the setting sun were scattered on the undulating contours of the dunes, thus adding a surreal dimension to the scene. While being filled with awe, I reminded myself to carefully consider the composition and then, made this photograph.

Camera: Nikon D60

Lens: Nikkor AF-S DX 18–55mm f/3.5–5.6G VR

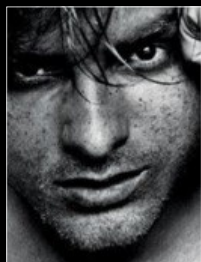
Exposure: 1/320sec at f/13, ISO 200

TIP 17

Look Before You Walk

When photographing wildflowers, be mindful of your steps. There are chances that you might be stepping on rare or endangered species of plants. Also, never pluck or uproot wildflowers, or worse, trample them.





Marcos Sobral

His keen interest in wildlife, landscape and fashion photography has led him to receive numerous awards in all three genres. He has even collaborated with the Spanish version of *National Geographic* magazine.

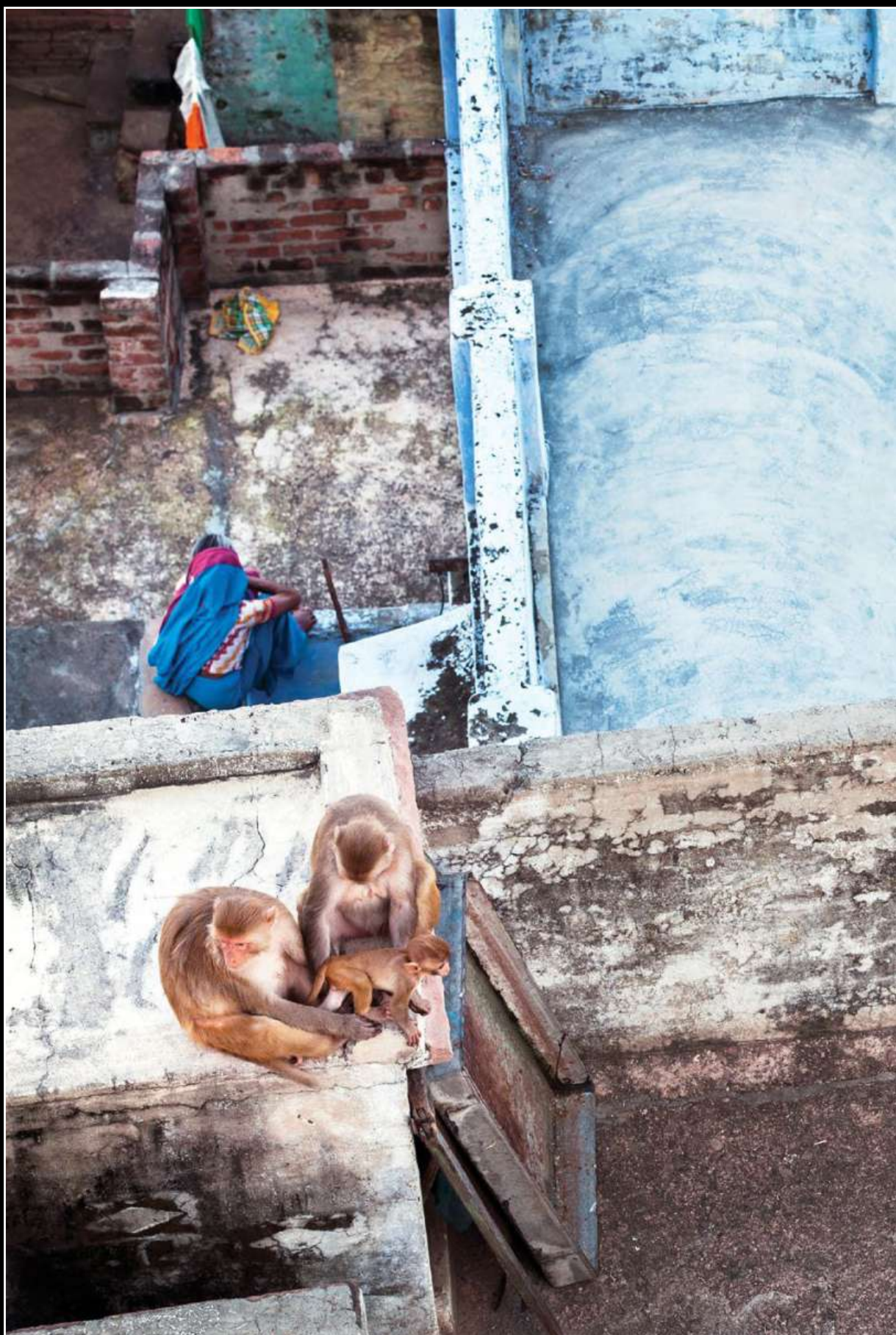
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TIP 18

Don't Ignore the Urban Wilderness

Animals are not found only in sanctuaries or in the wild.

Several species have turned urban spaces into their homes. There are great stories to be told and documented here, in how these animals live in these spaces and coexist with humans.





“Sometimes, all you need is a single moment or action to bring the photograph into its entirety.”

Varanasi is one of the oldest inhabited cities in India. It is also home to Rhesus Macaques, who have adapted to living alongside the city's residents, even populating its temples. At the time that I shot the image, I was at a rooftop bar with a bunch of colleagues.

While everyone was having a drink, I was wandering around, watching the activities taking place on the level below. I spent almost two hours observing the monkeys, hoping for something special to happen. It eventually did, when the mother lifted her child in the air, while the macaques tended to their young.

Camera: Nikon D700

Lens: Nikkor AF-S 70-200mm f/2.8G ED VR II

Exposure: 1/100sec at f/8, ISO 640



ON ASSIGNMENT

🌸 Flowers symbolise life and that everything is ephemeral. With the crowns, I wanted to remind people that these animals' lives are precious too, that they deserve more than what we give them.

Their Crowning Glory

By using flowers, Sophie Gamand gives dog portraiture a twist, and lends a breath of fresh air to one of the most misunderstood breeds, the Pit Bull.

Milan Kundera once wrote that dogs are our link to paradise. "They don't know evil or jealousy or discontent. To sit with a dog on a hillside on a glorious afternoon is to be back in Eden, where doing nothing was not boring, it

was peace." Yet, a lot of people hold strong prejudices against these faithful animals, especially Pit Bulls.

Every year, an upward of one million Pit Bulls are euthanised in the United States alone. Since they were often bred to fight, their association with violence has often led

🕒 I try not to get into an emotional state when I photograph at the shelter, as it's hard to not smile at their beautiful faces. But when I am on the computer looking at the images, it hits me. It's heartbreaking that a lot of people mistreat these animals.

them to attract abusive owners. But what we fail to realise is that dogs are what people make of them. The *Flower Power: Pit Bulls of the Revolution* series is an attempt to peel away the layers of mistrust that have shadowed these dogs for a long time.

My Perspective

Nothing expresses beauty the way flowers do. Their delicateness and fragility are ▶

My Assignment

Description

It is a series of portraits challenging the way we look at dogs, particularly Pit Bulls.

Duration

It's an ongoing project which I began in July 2014.

Notes

Our treatment of dogs is a reflection of our humanity. They mirror us. What does that mirror reflect back?





I have had lots of people tell me how the images changed the way they perceive Pit Bulls. The portraits forced them to open their mind, and I think this is very rewarding for an artist.

➤ **The most dogs that I have photographed in a single day is 42. However, I prefer when the process is slow. Creating the crowns alone is a meditative process, which I enjoy a lot.**

qualities that I wanted to emphasise in the portraits. The idea was inspired by Baroque and Rococo art, or the contemporary form of it, which is kitsch art, as they celebrate beauty in everyday things.

I also wanted to challenge the notion of the idea of 'monsters'. People generally expect the worst from shelter dogs, when

in reality they are the most resilient. The fact that they are still able to love, despite all the torture and abuse they have endured, is remarkable and inspiring.

The Process

I mostly photograph the dogs at the shelter. After I have familiarised myself

My Equipment

I don't feel the need to talk about what camera or lens I use. This is because I don't see myself as a photographer. I use photography as a tool to further my creative process, but I am not defined by my gear.

Tips for Photographing Animals for Adoption Agencies

- **Fulfilling the Purpose:** Ask yourself what feature of the animal would increase its chances of adoption? Would you like to bring out the animal's vibrant personality with the help of props, or maybe emphasise on their free spirit by letting them run around in a field or garden?
- **Lesser the Crowd the Better:** Shelter animals are usually quite wary of large crowds. This is why it's best if there are few people in the room. Doing this will also give you their undivided attention, when you're photographing them.

with them, I decide which of the premade flower crowns would best suit the dog. Fortunately, the Pit Bulls don't realise that they are wearing a crown, as they are designed to be as less intrusive as possible.

The airbrushed look in the portraits is inspired by vintage hand-painted photographs. I not only wanted to create a nostalgic feel, but a faded look too, to symbolise the unfortunate reality of the

dogs. I spend about one to two hours creating the effect.

I am not sure as to how long I am going to carry on with the project. But whenever I think about the number of dogs that are languishing in animal shelters, I wish more people would adopt rather than buy. If only I could photograph all the homeless dogs in the world. **BP**

— *As told to Conchita Fernandes*

To view more images from Sophie's work, you can visit her website www.sophiegamand.com

📌 I am really happy to see the difference that my work has had on the adoption rate of these neglected animals. Some dogs have been waiting for over two years with no interest from adopters, but found homes two weeks after their portraits came out.







Himalayan Tale

The 2015 Independence Quattro Drive story has some epic protagonists – both of the man and machine persuasion

The 2015 Independence Quattro Drive is not just a celebratory drive. It is not simply that you point the car in a direction and drive away. What it is, is life altering – a world of experiences that are sure to change the way one looks at life. These are not our words, but those of the participants. People who at the beginning of the drive were absolute strangers but by the end, forged a bond that'd last a lifetime. As always at the IQD, we drove Audi's finest SUVs to the majestic Himalayas

to celebrate our country's Independence Day.

This year, Team IQD headed to Chushul, to pay homage to the martyrs at the Rezang La War Memorial. Built in memory of the soldiers of the 13 Kumaon Regiment who fought with grit and valour against the Chinese in 1962, the memorial serves as a reminder of the ultimate sacrifice that these men made to protect our country.

The journey, however, to this historic location was a tale by itself. For the first time, we split the IQD into two legs. The first batch would drive our convoy of Audis – two Q3s,

A proud moment for all of us as we hoist the national flag at the Rezang La Memorial. Pangong Lake served as the perfect backdrop for the jubilation click. Our convoy entering Leh was quite a sight. So was the blanket of stars at the Chushul campsite. One last click with our soldiers and we're off on the road again



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two Q5s and a Q7 from Chandigarh to Leh where they would be joined by the second batch of participants who'd flown to Leh directly. And from there, Team IQD drove to Chushul – the more the merrier.

The morning on flag-off day was a time for everyone to get acquainted with their new company – both of the man and machine persuasion. The air was charged with excitement, heavily fuelled by the boisterous participants and the stunning Audis getting readied for the challenging drive ahead. We got onto the Chandigarh-Manali highway to be greeted by smooth tarmac as we weaved past early morning traffic. Gradually, we picked up pace and began our climb towards Manali reaching our destination by nightfall.

The next day we drove up the first pass, the mighty Rohtang. Now altitude sickness is a serious problem and a few participants did feel the effects as we crossed the pass. We reached Jispa by late afternoon where we got a chance to take a breather and attend to our gorgeous quattros – you know us petrolheads and our obsession with keeping all rides squeaky clean.

The drive to Leh was one of the most difficult with the Baralacha La Pass and the onward route to Pang turning out to be the most treacherous. No sweat for the Audis though with the magic of quattro making it easy work of driving through the slush, ruts, gravel, rocks or in a nutshell, modelled-by-nature roads. These SUVs proved their worth and garnered praise from every participant as they were cradled through

all the mayhem on the road. Pang to Leh, though, was a brilliant stretch of road and the famous More Plains played perfect hosts to the Audis as they were finally able to stretch their legs. The final few kilometres before we entered Leh town was like the cherry on top of the cake.

Next day we set out for Chushul via the quaint village of Tangtse. While driving to our destination, we passed by some of the most magnificent natural rock formations. We reached Chushul an hour before sun down where our camp was already set-up! This part turned out to be the most enriching experience of our drive. Surrounded by the mountains, under an azure sky, isolated from the world, time seemed to have come to standstill.

Independence Day arrived and the fresh mountain air had us all pumped up with excitement as we were finally headed to Rezang La. At the Martyr's Day service, the account of the events of the 1962 battle, rendered many of us teary-eyed – it only served to further strengthen our respect for our soldiers. It was a perfect prelude to our little IQD tradition of hoisting the Tricolour high up there in the Himalayas.

We then drove to the breathtaking Pangong Lake, our stopover for the night, to unwind after what was an adventurous trip.

The 2015 OVERDRIVE Independence Quattro Drive turned out to be yet another Live Life In OVERDRIVE experience made up of unforgettable memories for us here at Team OD and the readers who joined us. **OD**



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Bajaate Raho!

Q & A

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BRIEFLY

Why is the 'hot shoe' called so?

The initial U-shaped design of the interface gave it the name 'shoe'. The 'hot shoe' completes the circuit between the camera and the flash, allowing synchronisation. If the interface is electrically isolated from the camera, it is called a 'cold shoe'.

DSLR or Mirrorless?

I've been told that choosing a DSLR over a mirrorless camera makes little difference unless I'm a professional photographer. Is that true, and are there other advantages aside from that?

Samanth Cheruku, Hyderabad, via email

It's not about whether you are a professional or not. A lot depends on the kind of photography you actually wish to do, not so much whether you are an amateur, hobbyist or professional. The most obvious advantage of a mirrorless camera is that it's smaller, without compromising on image quality. So if you're a hobbyist who'd be more inclined to carry your camera if it's smaller, a mirrorless camera may be a better option. Also, video shooting with most mirrorless cameras is of superior quality, and definitely more convenient. On the other hand, DSLR systems are more mature, and hence, tend to give more lens options. AF and battery life are two key features where mirrorless cameras still lag behind DSLRs.

Approaching Subjects

How do I approach people in a different country for street photography?

Mrigank Patel, Ahmedabad, via email

It is very important to understand the cultural and geopolitical sensitivities of any place you visit before you seek to photograph the people.



K. Madhavan Pillai

➔ **Approach your subjects with a smile and learn a few local language phrases like 'Thank You'.**

Observing their way of life gives you valuable insight into stories, emotions or phenomena that might fascinate you. People are generally comfortable being photographed as long as their privacy is respected. Being open about your intent to take their photographs and talking about why you'd like to photograph them will go a long way in establishing trust.

All Rights Reserved?

How do I make sure my photographs are not misused for commercial purposes?

Bilal Ahmed, Pune, via email

'Click-bait' websites are notorious for the unacknowledged use of images—ranging from those not necessarily in the public domain to photographs shared on social media. A lot of digital watermarking tools are currently

HOW TO

Avoid Undesired Vibrations while Shooting a Long Exposure

Undesired vibration ruins the efforts and patience put into composing a good image by using long exposures. More than often, external perturbation or the interaction between camera elements gives rise to vibration. Here are a few tips to prevent the same.

Use a Sturdy Tripod

Use a sturdy, sufficiently heavy tripod compatible with your camera. Make sure that the tripod is in stable equilibrium with the surface it is placed on. If you anticipate windy conditions, it is advisable to use dead weights, and to make sure that the centre of gravity of your setup is not too high from the surface.

Turn Stabilisation Off

Image stabilisation systems usually work by compensating for possible external vibration by

adjusting the position of some element of the camera. Even in cases where your setup is stabilised with respect to the surface, the stabilisation system might make this adjustment, resulting in a blur.

Use the Self-timer mode

It is essential to maintain minimal contact with the setup once you start shooting. If you determine the exposure time beforehand, you can set the timer accordingly.

Turn on Mirror Lock-up

Using the Mirror Lock-up function ensures that the mirror changes the path of the incident light from the viewfinder to the image sensor before the shutter is opened. This ensures that any internal vibration caused by the flipping of the mirror is prevented. You will have to press the shutter button a second time to release it.



Michael Hart

Maintaining a steady camera is essential to obtaining well defined traffic trails.

The 600-star Rule

What is the 600-star rule and how do I use it?

Rohini Banerjee, Kolkata, via email

The 600-star rule is an empirical formula to estimate the longest exposure before the stars in a photograph start trailing. It is useful when you want to show a star-laden sky, but wish to avoid portraying the star's movements. Divide 600 by the focal length of your lens (in mm) to get the exposure value in seconds.

The 600-star rule can be applied to all full-frame sensors. For an APS-C sensor, exposure is determined by dividing 400 by the focal length of the lens, to compensate for crop factor. So, for example, if you are using a 150mm lens, on a full frame body, the maximum exposure possible would be 4sec, and on an APS-C body, it would be approximately 2.5sec. The exposure may, to a degree, be influenced by the latitude of your location, which determines the relative motion of the starry sky in your shot to the rotation of the earth.



K Madhavan Pillai

Question
of the
Month

➔ The best way to go about it is to use the formula to obtain an estimate and use it as a benchmark for the exposure, depending on whether you're looking for a starry sky without blur, or a star trail.

BRIEFLY

What is an artifact?

Artifacts are undesirable distortions in the composition of a digital image. Artifacts manifest themselves due to loss of information, either due to lossy compression (JPEG), variation in the amount of light collected by the sensor, or insufficient resolution for the desired print size.

available, but they are not foolproof. The best solution is to upload your images on a photo-sharing application registered with your email. Plenty of them provide the option to reserve rights to your images and it is advisable to do so. Only recently, a Flickr user lost the rights to his photograph because the image was listed for unrestricted commercial usage under the Creative Commons license. Most professional photographers prefer uploading low-resolution images on their websites or portfolios, accompanied by a date stamp, so that they cannot be commercially reproduced either in web or in print. If you come across any such misuse, do contact a lawyer with knowledge of intellectual property rights.

Dark Bars

What are the dark bars that appear on screen while watching some movies on the TV? It also happens when I display my photographs on a TV screen.

Himanshu Singh, Mumbai, via email

The TV screen uses an aspect ratio (the ratio of the width of the screen to the height) of 16:9, while movies use a 21:9 aspect ratio. As a result, the height of the frame of a movie, when displayed on the TV screen, is short. As a result, two horizontal black bars appear on the TV screen, which shows that the vertical frame length in a television set is greater than that in a movie frame. Similarly, movies shot on 35mm have an aspect ratio of 4:3, while those shot in 70mm have an aspect ratio of 11:5.

f/8 and Be There

What is the origin of 'f/8 and be there'?

Abhishek Sinha, Delhi, via email

The phrase is attributed to photojournalist Arthur 'Weegee' Fellig, who followed his subjects around the streets of New York. For speed, he relied on the depth of field of the 35mm lens set to the hyperfocal distance, at f/8. The phrase is very popular among photojournalists and street photographers, since capturing the moment is most essential. A lesser-known variant of this phrase, 'f/11 and hold it steady', is often attributed to Walker Evans, the legendary photographer and contemporary of Weegee. Evans' style involved a lot more of foreground-background subject play, which needed a larger depth of field. The use of f/11, of course, would reduce the amount of light entering the lens, and hence, necessitate a slower shutter speed.

➔ Fellig's nickname, 'Weegee', was derived from 'Ouija', since he would often arrive at the scene of crime ahead of the police, and it would almost seem as if he had supernatural capabilities with respect to sniffing out crime.



Robert Couse-Baker



Rathika Ramasamy

- She fell in love with bird photography during her first visit to Keoladeo National Park, Bharatpur in 2004.
- Her greatest photographic inspirations have been the nature and wildlife chroniclers Arthur Morris and John Shaw.
- She stays 15 minutes away from the Okhla Bird Sanctuary in Delhi, and the large number of resident (in summers) and migratory birds (in winters) found in the capital attracted her to bird photography.

Tales of the Untamed

Rathika Ramasamy tells Tanvi Dhulia about her passion for documenting a part of the world that we often distance ourselves from—the wild.

Sometimes, inspiration may lie within oneself, but at other times, one may need to travel far and wide to discover a spark. For Rathika Ramasamy, it is the birdsong and the promise of a tranquil sunrise that draws her towards the forests. “Being in the lap

of nature inspires me most. It can make me forget the chill of a winter morning or the scorching heat of the summer.”

The Challenges of Finding Oneself

Wildlife is one of the few genres where, as a photographer, one has almost zero ▶



INDIAN PHOTOGRAPHY FESTIVAL
A curtain raiser of
the exciting lineup of
exhibits in Hyderabad

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GREAT MASTERS

William Henry Jackson

The story of the pioneer
and visionary

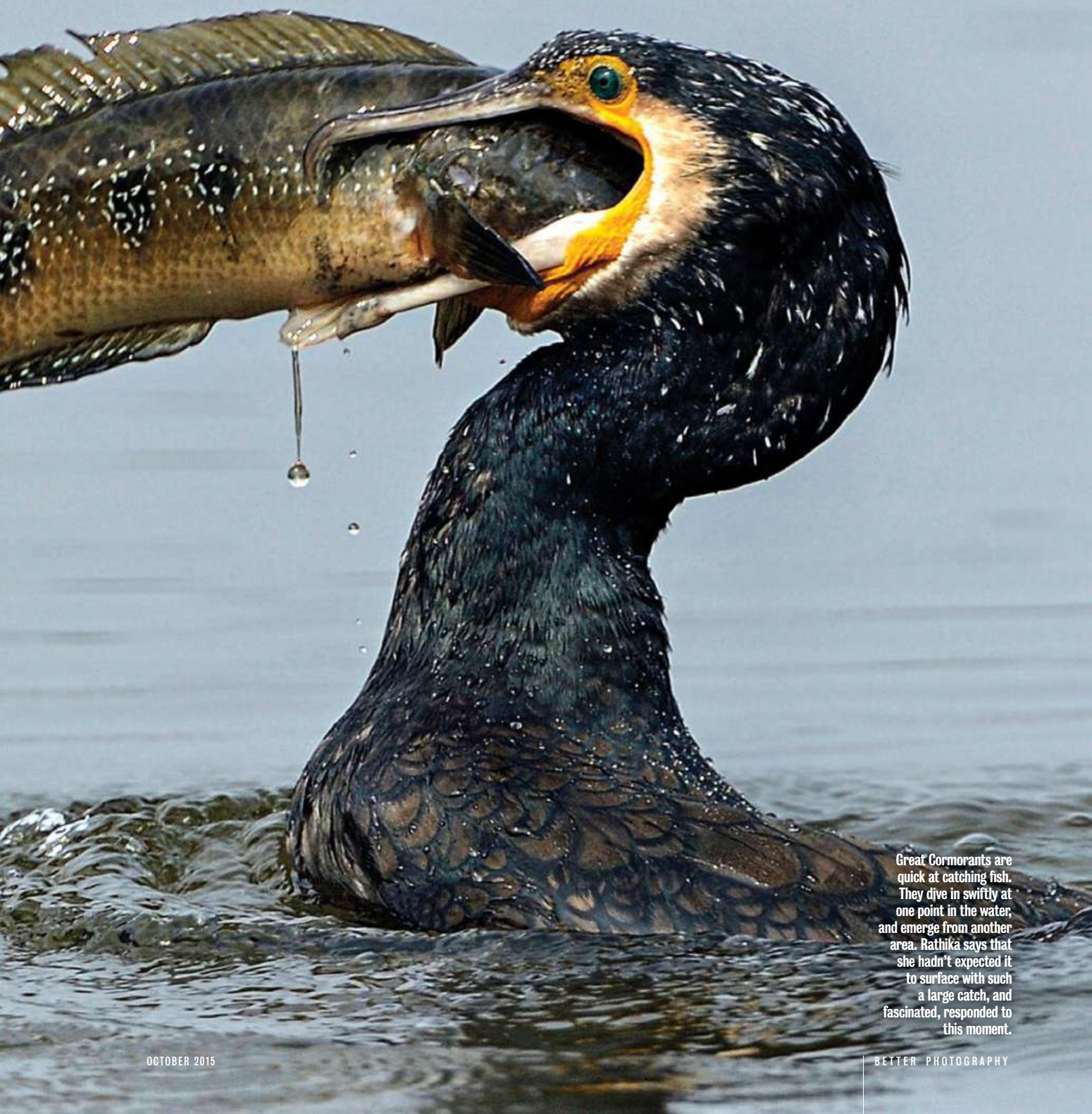
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PHOTOFEATURE

Anuar Patjane
Floriuk on his love for
oceanic life

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Great Cormorants are quick at catching fish. They dive in swiftly at one point in the water, and emerge from another area. Rathika says that she hadn't expected it to surface with such a large catch, and fascinated, responded to this moment.



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📌 Titled *Water Dance*, at first glance, it seems like a mirror was dropped in the middle of the lake to reflect the expression of a startled Indian Darter.

control over one's subject. When a mere sighting can take days or even weeks, how does one, over time, exercise their own authorship over one's work? According to Rathika, building one's style while photographing wildlife is possible, but painstaking. "Experience is the only thing that has helped, as with time, I have invested in an intense amount of research,

and have been in love with the wild to such a degree that I can predict the way a particular animal or bird would behave in a certain situation. In that sense, I am able to preempt the moment and make a picture in my head, even before I actually press the shutter."

And that is why her best work goes well beyond just straight-on documentation. ▶

"It is essential to know your subjects as you know yourself. They need to get used to your presence so that you can get the images you want."

GADGETS & GEAR

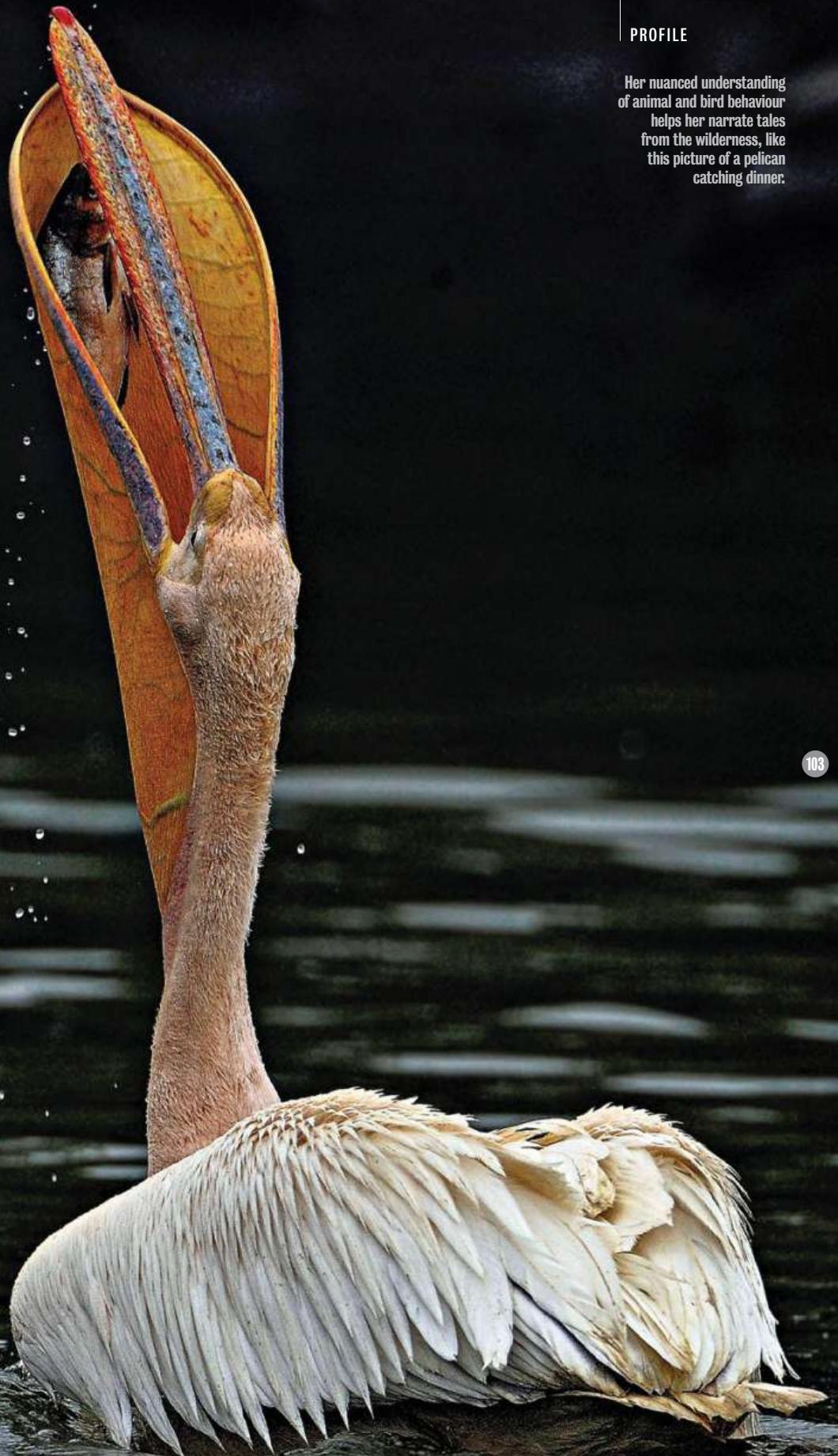
- She feels that beginners need not spend the kind of exorbitant sums that high-end telephotos demand. Practise using a superzoom camera or if you are going for short trips, rent the lenses instead of buying them.
- Aside from full frame Nikon bodies and telephotos, she says that the most important component in her kit is her tripod. "It's underrated, and one must carry it at all times, especially to photograph birds."



📌 The moments she captures range from aggressive to restful, and sometimes playful. Here the Grey Heron looks almost comical, frozen right before it spreads its wings.

PROFILE

Her nuanced understanding of animal and bird behaviour helps her narrate tales from the wilderness, like this picture of a pelican catching dinner.





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⚡ Sometimes, it is one trip that changes the direction of one's photographic path, and for Rathika, who also dabbled in conceptual portraits and travel photography, it was a visit to a national park that captured her heart..

In Rathika, you do not have a typical wildlife photographer who is documenting her own encounters with nature, but is instead, only a witness, a witness to some of the most fascinating interactions within the animal kingdom. Like a documented theatre of a monitor lizard making a frantic escape from a parrot's talons, or a clandestine moment of a sambar quietly spying a tiger across a river. "For me, the

ideal way to photograph an animal is in their natural habitat, depicting their best characteristics, and moments of activity."

Ethics Come First

As someone who believes in quietly observing the rhythms of the animal kingdom play themselves out, Rathika is extremely critical of modern practices of photographing 'captive wildlife'. "When we say 'captive', there is no 'wild' in the subject!" She insists that one cannot learn wildlife photography by practising with animals who are trained to pose for pictures. She is slightly more forgiving towards zoos. Although she finds the sight of a confined animal pitiful, there's still comfort in the fact that if maintained well (which they are often not), they can serve people who may not have access to nature reserves.

Sharing Stories for a Greater Purpose

Photography is not merely about making pretty pictures, but also about using those photos to give back, to use those images as

⚡ Monitor lizards often try to steal parakeet eggs. This one got caught in the act, which led to the bird being hellbent on trying to bite its tail. The entire attack only lasted a few seconds.

"Challenges that I may have faced as a woman photographer? I never thought about this until you asked. Fortunately animals and birds are not gender biased!"



Her favourite wildlife spot is Keoladeo National Park in Rajasthan, where these pelicans were photographed. She says that it offers great lighting along with both woodland and wetland backgrounds.



a means to spread awareness about, and help bring about change. In 2005, Rathika participated in an exhibition by the Sankat Mochan foundation, for the Clean Ganga campaign, where she, along with other photographers, created a series of images depicting the current state of the holy river, and the environmental and health hazards that its pollution causes. "Photos convey much more powerfully than words do," she says. "They can also help spread awareness more swiftly." She cites the successful Amur

Falcon campaign as an instance when photography helped protect an endangered species. The movement that helped save the small raptor that was massacred annually during its migratory flight through Nagaland is another example she mentions.

It's such campaigns that tell us stories that need to be known. They move us to take a stand. Rathika Ramasamy's images show nature in its most savage yet beautiful form, and we see, through her eyes, a world we're rapidly losing touch with.

Being a witness who understands animal behaviour so well, her pictures are empathetic and also humanise the animal kingdom.

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TIPS BY RATHIKA

- Blend in completely. This includes the attire you wear (grey/green), headgear of the same colour, not using any artificial perfumes/soaps and respecting the personal space of each animal.
- Collaborate with the right people. Hiring an experienced driver and a knowledgeable naturalist are very crucial.



Indian Photography Festival All Set to Begin in Hyderabad

With an exciting lineup of Indian and international exhibits, the Indian Photography Festival promises to be a visual feast for everyone.

For the very first time, Hyderabad will witness a photography festival with several exciting exhibitions from India and abroad. The Indian Photography Festival (IPF) is an initiative of the Light Craft Foundation along with the Government of Telangana to showcase a

wide range of photography, across various genres. Spearheaded by Aquin Mathews and joined by Chandrasekhar Singh and Swarat Ghosh, the festival promises to bring a range of interesting photography exhibits and activities. It will be held from the 1–10 October, 2015 at the State Art Gallery in Madhapur, Hyderabad.

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Ben Lowy

Benjamin Lowy is an American photojournalist represented by Reportage by Getty Images, and is known for his work as a conflict photographer and a proponent of cellphone photography. *Iraq | Perspectives* was made from 2003 to 2008. It reflects a distant and detached perspective on life during the Iraq War. The windows of the Humvees represent a barrier that impedes dialogue.



John Issac

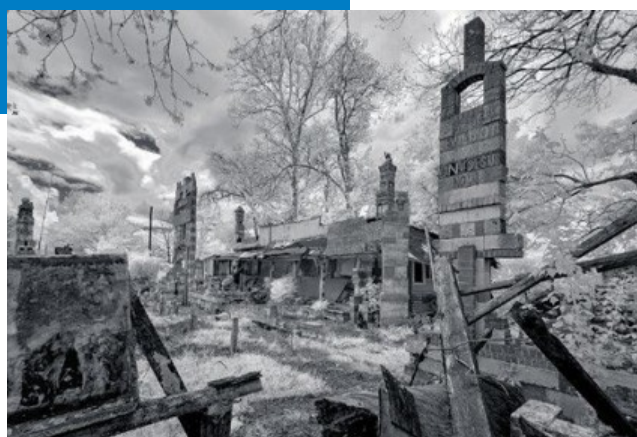
John Isaac is an Indian-born, award-winning photographer and author who is known for his work as a photojournalist for the United Nations, where he documented over 120 countries and some of the most intense suffering of our times. He is also known for his independent freelance work, photographing celebrities. *The Art of Seeing* is a retrospective of John's work over 45 years.



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Russell Hart

Russell Hart is an award winning American fine art photographer and the former executive editor of *American Photo* magazine. He is also a leading faculty with various media schools and has authored several books on his work. The exhibition will show a collection of his fine art photographs.



ATTRACTIONS AT IPF 2015

Artist Talks

These will feature photographers like Benjamin Lowy, Amit Mehra, John Isaac, Aditya Arya, Balan Madhavan, Russell Hart, Barbara Davidson, D Ravinder Reddy, Jaywant Naidu, Chinky Shukla, Ravi Reddy, Michael Monteiro and Samar Jodha amongst others.

Satellite Exhibitions in Hyderabad

There will be partner galleries around the city like NAFU, Alliance Francaise, Salarjung Museum, Rainbow Art Gallery, Kalakriti Art Gallery, Muse Art Gallery, Shilparamam, State Museum, Taramati Baradari, KBR Park, Our Sacred Space, Gallery Cafe and others.

Master Classes

Russell Hart, John Isaac and Benjamin Lowy will be conducting a master class on the art of visual storytelling. Balan Madhavan will be conducting a workshop on wildlife photography. To enroll for these master classes, you can visit www.indianphotofest.com

Barbara Davidson

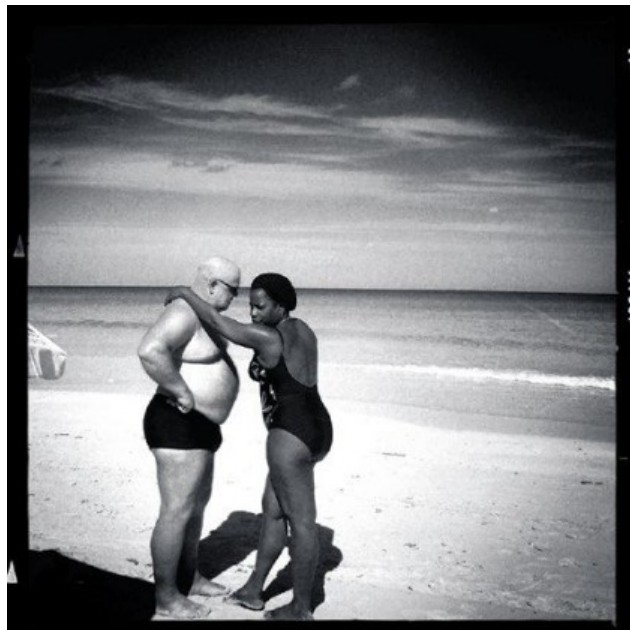
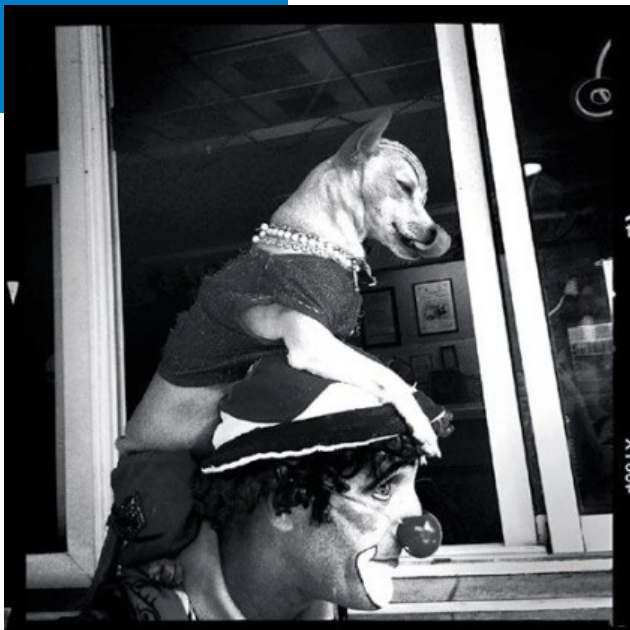
As a staff photographer for the *Los Angeles Times*, Barbara Davidson won the 2011 Pulitzer Prize for feature photography, and a National Emmy in multimedia storytelling, for her work on innocent victims trapped in the crossfire of deadly gang violence in Los Angeles. She also won the 2006 Pulitzer Prize for her coverage of Hurricane Katrina.



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Ilknur Can

An Istanbul-based street photographer, Ilknur Can was influenced by the iPhoneography movement and continues her work in it. She created some seemingly timeless photographs using her iPhone and by using a vintage black and white app filter, she further blurred the distinction between the past and future.



Michael Chavez Robinson



The Driest Seasons : The California Dust Bowl is a series of stories that the *Los Angeles Times* photographer Michael Chavez Robinson produced with reporter Diana Marcum in 2014. He photographed the plight of people amidst a devastating drought that continues to alter life in the Central Valley, California, USA.



Cheryl Diaz Myer

Pulitzer Prize winning photojournalist Cheryl Diaz Myer is best known for her daring coverage of the Iraq War and her insightful documentation of women facing adversity across the globe. She covered the aftermath of the violence in Baghdad as a unilateral journalist. *Life in a Baghdad Mental Hospital* is about the Al Rashad Mental Hospital which has been ravaged by 300 people.



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ATTRACTIONS AT IPF 2015

Evening Screenings

One of the best things about a festival like IPF is the evening screenings. These will include various works of photography not included in the print exhibitions. Additionally, visitors will be able to watch documentaries and talks on photography.

Photo Walk with Benjamin Lowy

Award-winning American photojournalist Benjamin Lowy will conduct a photowalk on one of days of the festival. He will take participants through unique image making on the streets. For more information, visit the IPF website.

Portfolio Reviews

Some of the biggest names attending the festival will conduct a portfolio review session at IPF. Photographers like John Issac, Russell Hart, Ben Lowy, Julia Durkins, Barbara Davidson, D Ravinder Reddy will critique and offer advice to those who enroll.

Marja Pirila

A photographer from Finland, Marja Pirilä converted a room into a camera obscura and embarked on the embarking on the *Interior/Exterior* project. Here, she captured an image of a person, their room and the view from their window all at the same time. Over time, the pictures began to form not only their living environment but also an excursion into reflections of memories, reveries, fears and dreams.



Bandi Rajan Babu

Among the many Indian pictorial photographers, one man who is distinct due to his style, versatility and mastery over photographic art and technique, is Bandi Rajan Babu. Born in 1939, his *Nudes in Nature* harmoniously blend his concept of expression of the sacredness of the human form with the beauty and spirit of divine splendour of nature.



Raja Trimbak Raj

Raja Trimbak Raj was the scion of a noble Maharashtra family of administrators, settled in Hyderabad. He gave up painting in favour of photography and learnt his craft in the 1920s and 30s, from England. This is an exciting look at work of one of India's earliest pictorialists, more so because his work has never been exhibited before.



Ron Haviv

Ron Haviv is an award-winning photojournalist and co founder of the photo agency VII, dedicated to documenting conflict and human rights issues around the globe. *Children of Darfur* seeks to show the daily, simple reality of life for Darfur's children, not as 'beneficiaries' of aid, but as people whose characters, outlooks, physical natures, and futures are being, perhaps permanently, shaped by current events.



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ATTRACTIONS AT IPF 2015

That's Life Collective

One of the exhibits at the IPF will feature That's Life, a collective of street photographers who capture life on the Indian streets in a fresh and unusual manner and with humour. With a drive to photograph everything happening on the streets, That's Life aims to promote the genre.

Head On Portrait Prize Finalists

The works of the finalists of the Head On Portrait Prize will be on display at the IPF. It is one of Australia's most respected portraiture exhibitions and their judging panel was James Estrin, Susan Sedgwick, Bronwyn Rennex and Moshe Rosenzweig.

Tales from Merwan's

The IPF will also see a talk by photographers Raj Lalwani (from **BP**) and Kashish Parpiani, who have extensively documented one of Mumbai's iconic Irani cafes. The 100-year institution was going to shut until it got a new lease of life, with the conversation that the photos spurred.

NCPA Photo Festival to Celebrate Photography in Mumbai

A long time patron of photography, the National Centre for Performing Arts (NCPA) is set to hold its first festival dedicated to photojournalism.

When a new India emerged in 1947, millions of lives were affected and displaced. These were exciting and tumultuous times in Indian history, which were documented tirelessly by the photojournalists of the time. In a tribute to these dedicated practitioners, the

NCPA will hold the NCPA Photo Festival in Mumbai from the 22nd to 26th October. The brainchild of photojournalist Mukesh Parpiani, the curator of the Piramal Gallery at NCPA, the festival will host several other exciting activities in the form of talks, workshops, portfolio review sessions and panel discussions.

A Gandhian himself, Jagan Mehta's documentation of M K Gandhi as he embarked on a peace march in Bihar, pre-Independence, gained him national and international recognition. He approached Gandhi as a subject in a more relaxed manner as compared to the photojournalists of the same era. His evocative images bring out the turmoil and the struggle Gandhi went through at the time.

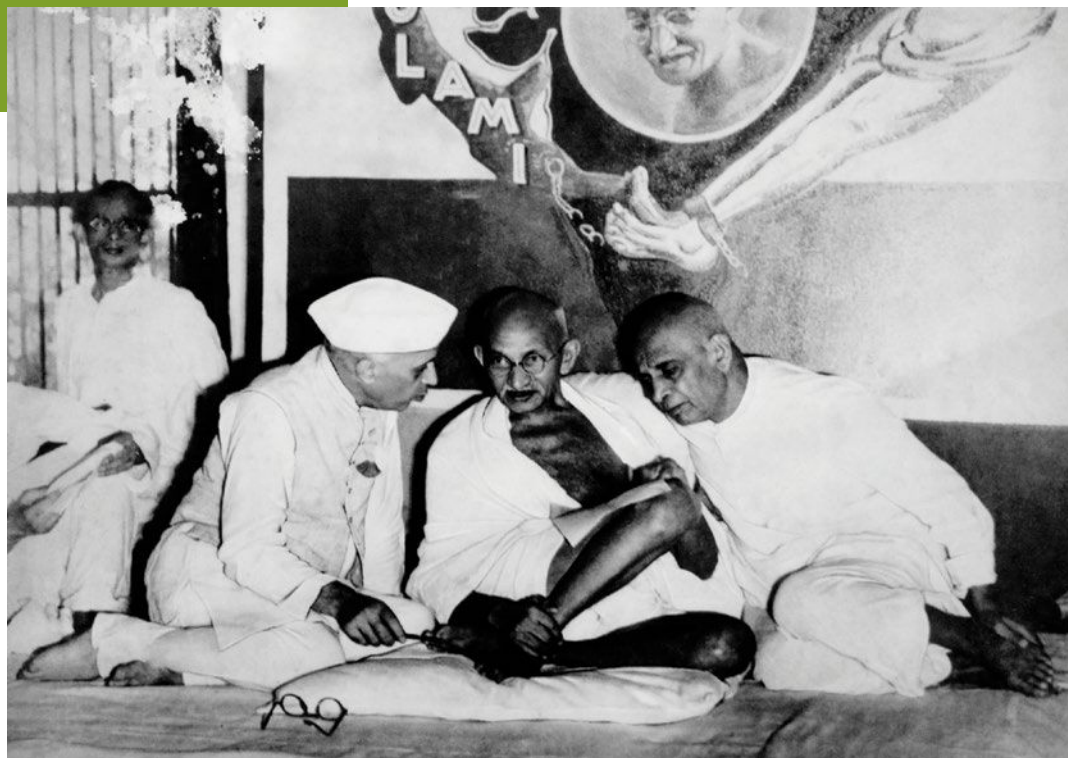
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Jagan Mehta



Kulwant Roy

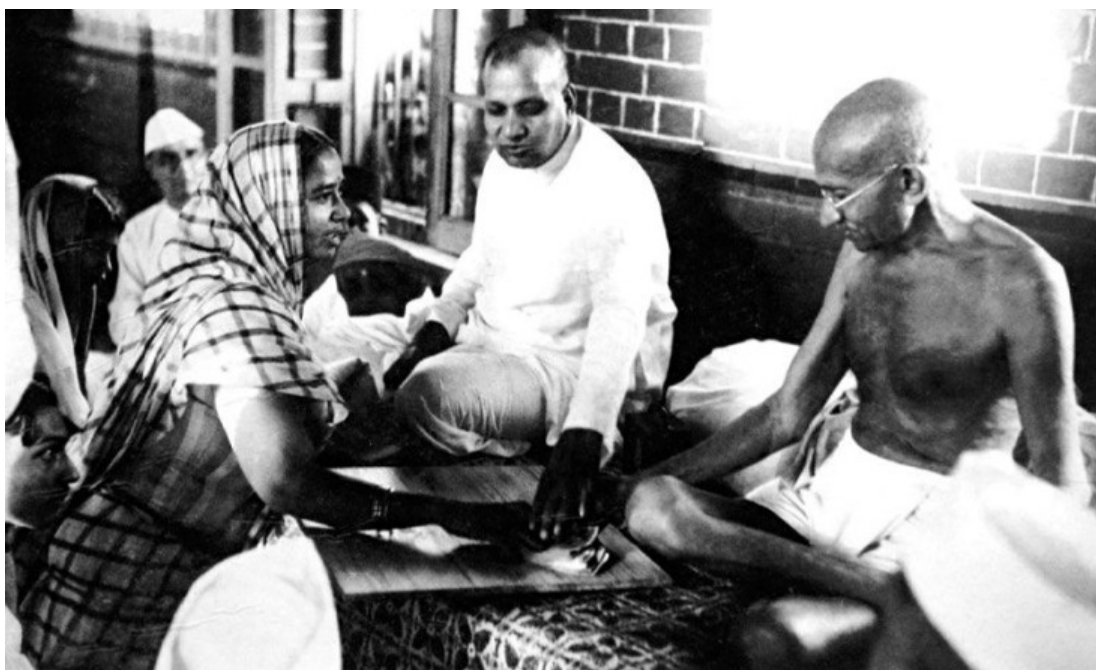
Kulwant Roy's photographs from a pre and post-independent India bring the viewer striking and simple moments from the leaders of the time. His photographs lay forgotten in crates for over 24 years, before being discovered by his nephew, photographer Aditya Arya in 2007.



The NCPA's Piramal Gallery has always showcased several works of photography, covering everything from retrospectives to contemporary photography.

Today, Kulwant Roy's images are recognised as a very important legacy to photojournalism.

Ever since his nephew Aditya Arya discovered the collection of photographs, he has worked tirelessly to archive them and bring them out in the public eye as an important documentation of Indian history.



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**ATTRACTIONS
AT NCPA
PHOTO FESTIVAL
2015**

Several Exhibitions at the Venue

The NCPA Photo Festival will feature the exhibits of 15 prominent photographers including A L Syed, R R Bhardwaj, T S Satyan, T S Nagarajan, T Kashinath, Raja Deen Dayal, S Paul, Raghubir Singh, Jitendra Arya and Mitter Bedi.

Portfolio Reviews Every Day

Through the duration of the festival, photographers will be able to get their portfolios reviewed by eminent practitioners. To get your portfolio reviewed, you can go to the NCPA every day at 12pm for the duration of the festival.

Performance Art Photography

The performing arts are quite naturally an evocative subject, and to demonstrate this, will be photographs by Mukesh Parpiani, Narendra Dangiya and Kiran Bhasin. Their exhibits cover the Symphony Orchestra of India along with images of dance, drama, music and cinema.

Homai Vyarawalla

Padma Vibhushan awardee Homai Vyarawalla was one of India's most prolific photojournalists who extensively photographed the Indian Independence Movement. Her images poignantly capture the Indian struggle for freedom in a profession that was entirely dominated by men at the time.



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Jitendra Arya

Jitendra Arya was one of the photojournalists capturing the Nehru and Gandhi families at the time of Independence. Apart from his historic images, he was also known for his iconic portraits of Indian film celebrities, made during his tenure as the Chief Photo Editor of The Times of India for 25 years.



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Mukesh Parpiani

Mukesh Parpiani is a renowned photojournalist with a career spanning close to four decades. He now explores photography as an art form and is also the curator of the Piramal Gallery at the NCPA.



The festival's main objective is to bring about an appreciation for the legacy of photojournalism left behind by legendary practitioners.

**ATTRACTIONS
AT NCPA
PHOTO FESTIVAL
2015**

Photography Talks and Discussions

As is the aim of any festival, the NCPA Photo Festival would like to spread the art of photography and make it accessible to everyone. One way that the festival is doing this is via the talks and discussions that will be held every evening at the Piramal Gallery.

Photo Walks and Workshops

The festival will be organising workshops and photowalks as well. These will be conducted by some of the most eminent photo practitioners in the industry today. The sessions will also include lighting setups and subjects as well.

All Day Reference Library

Along with all the exhibitions and talks, an all-day reference library will give festival-goers yet another point of interest. The festival plans to put on display several photobooks and books on photography for the entire five-day duration of the festival.



Mounted Albumen showing Garden of the Gods (Colorado, USA), with Pikes Peak in the background, 1887.



(1843–1942)

William Henry Jackson

Supriya Joshi takes a trip back to the past and rediscovers the works of William Henry Jackson—a pioneer, visionary and an early practitioner of various processes and techniques in print and image making.

There is a rather unusual and unfortunate trope that exists for many early 19th Century photographers. Some of the most talented, hardworking visionary photographers from that time either died too young, or in abject poverty. It became almost like a common thread that connected them all, and yet, here's the story of William Henry Jackson, a photographer who lived till the ripe old age of 99, engaged in creative activity.

But it's not just the length of his lifespan that matters, it is also his contribution

towards photography. At a time when humanity was only just discovering the medium, he managed to develop and hone a nuanced vision, which has inspired scores of photographers after him.

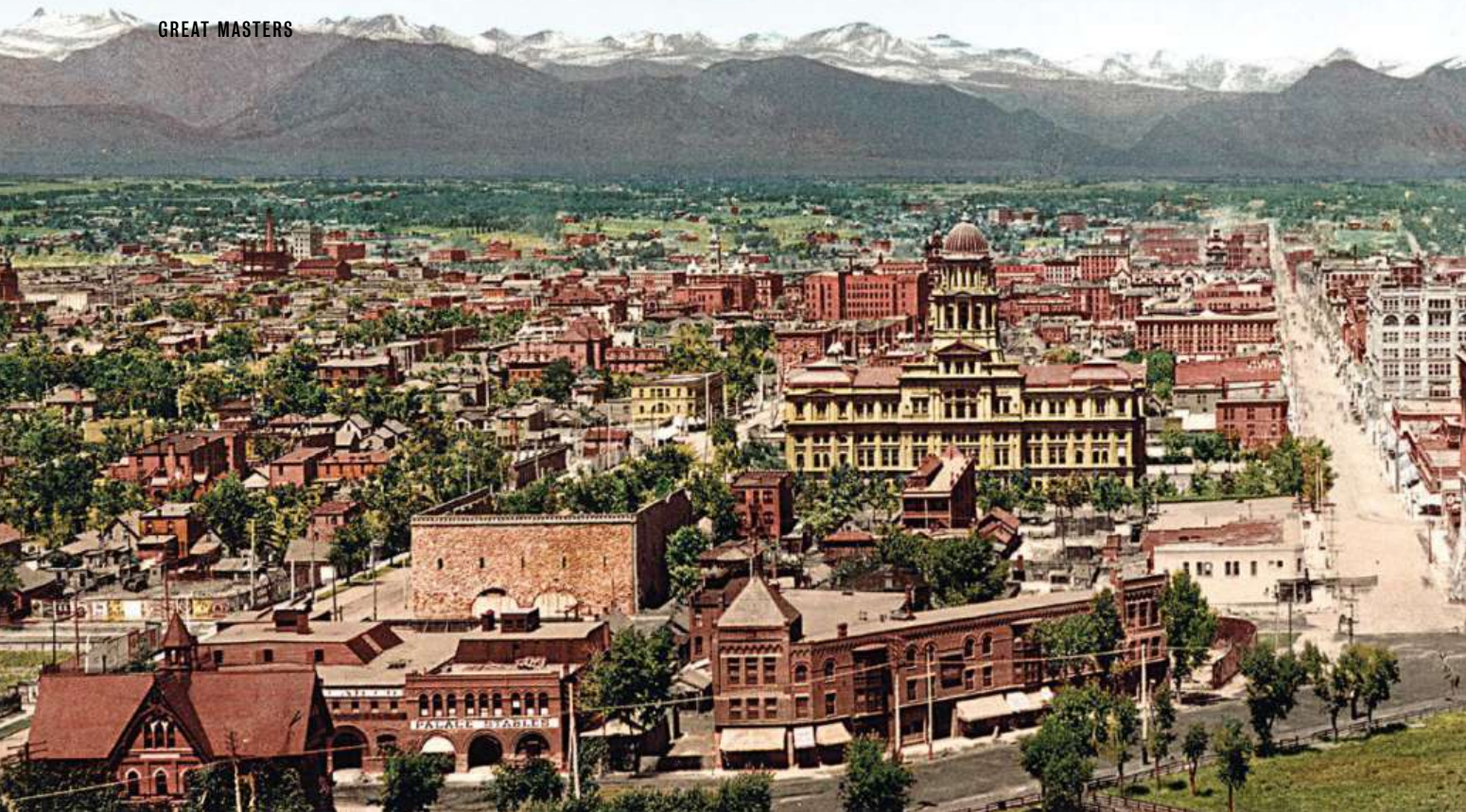
An Early Introduction

Using a camera as a means of recreation and as a hobby was introduced a mere four years before Jackson was born, so he grew up at a time when people around him had begun exploring the medium. It was an exciting time to be a photographer. His father was amongst the first in his

Apart from being a photographer, Jackson also served as a technical advisor for the film *Gone with the Wind* (1939).



A hand-tinted colour photochrom shot in Havana., Cuba, 1900.



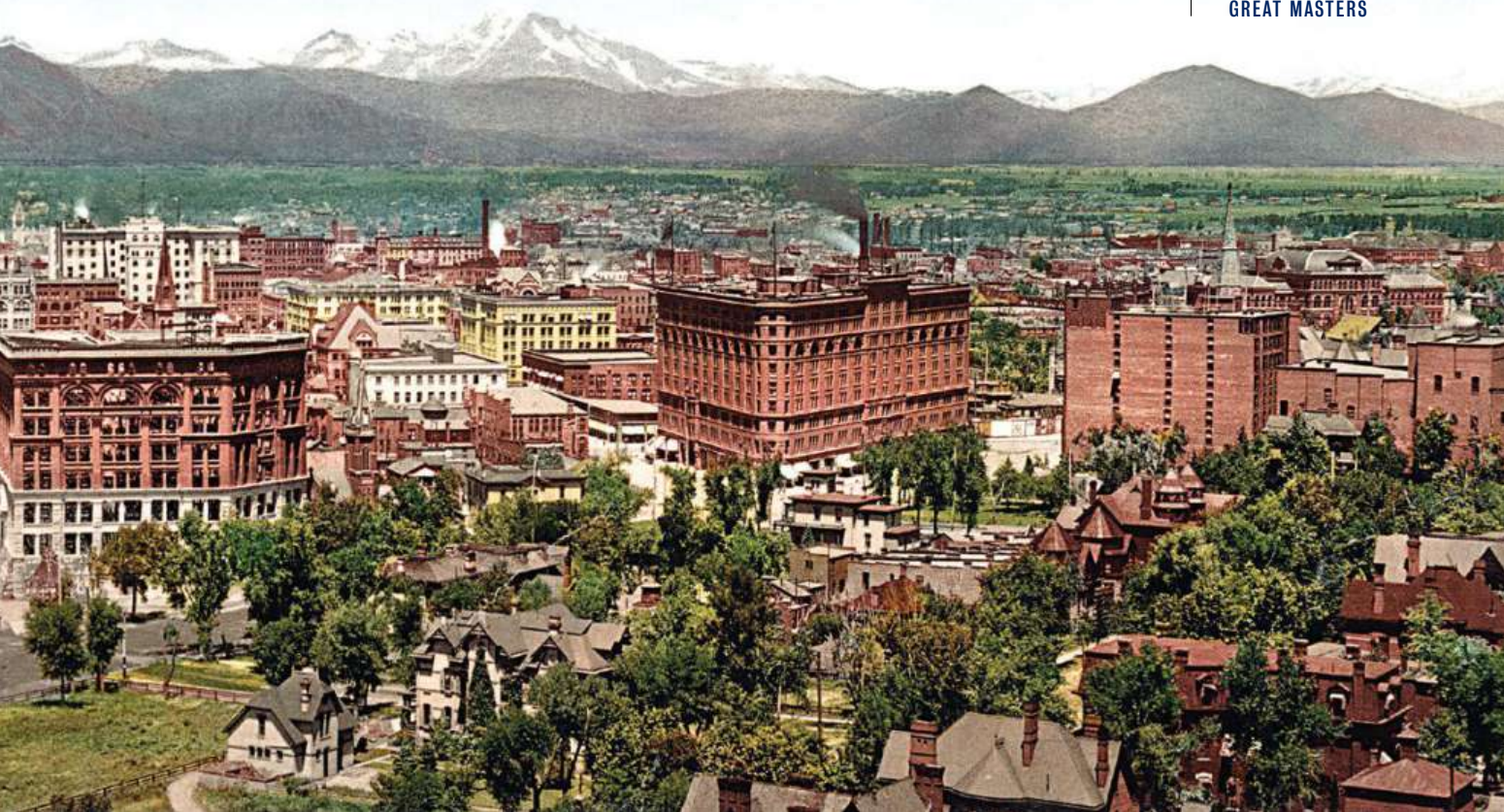
📍 New Orleans, 1890.
Mule drawn tram at
Henry Clay Monument,
Canal Street and
St Charles.

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neighbourhood to purchase a camera, but never took a liking to it. The camera then passed to William to use as a toy, but he discovered there was a lot more he could

do with a camera than just play with it. Moreover, his mother, who was a painter, instilled in him ways of seeing and the art of composition.





📍 A colour photochrom of Denver, Colorado, 1898.

War and Photography

In his early days, he also worked under photographer C C Schoonmaker, where he spent his time learning how to retouch and colourise images. At the age of 19, he served as a garrison in the American Civil War, spending his time making drawings of his friends and other sceneries around him. He would even colourise images of war heroes, and word of his expertise began spreading. Soon after the war, he was offered a job by a leading photographer for a salary of USD 25 per week. Jackson could not refuse such a viable offer, and thus took his first few steps into the world of photography.

Travels to the Beyond

In America, the spirit of travel and adventure took off in a big way during the mid-1800s, with many governmental expeditions taking place to explore the great beyond. In 1870, he became the official photographer for geologist Ferdinand Vandiveer Hayden, where they would travel all the way to Yellowstone River and Rocky mountains, a terrain that was never seen before. Jackson would carry bags of camera equipment and make pictures in some of the harshest terrains. He used the collodion process, which was quite cumbersome on its own. Apart from that, he used a stereographic camera, an

8 x 10 plate-size camera and one which was as large as 18 x 22 inches! To carry his equipment, he had to have five assistants and several mules. On top of that, each image would take the better part of an hour to develop. Yet, despite all the issues, Jackson managed to make more than 300 photos from the expedition. People were ▶

📍 Indian women in railway coach below signs reading 'Native females' and 'Third Class', 1895.



Here's an interesting anecdote about William Henry Jackson—he was the great-great nephew of Samuel Wilson, also known as Uncle Sam.



Editha, 1903.

introduced to the largely untouched landscapes and the beautiful flora and fauna of the country. His images were also crucial in the government establishing Yellowstone as a national park on 1 March 1872. The national park would eventually becoming the breeding grounds for some of the most legendary landscape photographers, including Ansel Adams.

Crossing Boundaries

His travels went beyond America, going as far as countries like China, India, Australia, Korea, Japan, Egypt and Tunisia. Here, he photographed the locals and brought back images of a face of mankind that the west had not seen before.

And yet, unlike some of his contemporaries, his pictures are not

In his lifetime, he wrote more than 50 books, as well as his own autobiography.



➤ Goldi shaman priest and assistant, 1895.

derogatory... he never looked at the people he photographed as 'others', but as a mere reflection of humanity. His photographs tell unheard stories, and in today's context, they are fantastic tales of our rich heritage, and how much we have changed as people.

Despite their contributions, it is easy to forget about early practitioners like



➤ Four women walking along sea-shore, 1895.

Jackson, but a mere revisiting of his work will open our eyes to what we probably did not know about photography and the world. His simple approach to complex subjects bring forth the need to broaden our own horizons. If for nothing else, his images can surely make us more empathetic photographers. ■

Mount Jackson in Yellowstone National Park was christened in honour of him.



➤ Goldi hunter on skis on ice, holding long spear, 1895.

A selection of some of the best images from the Indian mainstream media

1000 Words

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Hemant Padalkar,
DNA

A Sea of Revelers

People are seen celebrating the Dahi handi festival in Panvel, Maharashtra. The close crop of the confusion of hands and bodies perfectly captures the chaos that goes into the festival.



Slight Adjustments

During Independence Day rehearsals in August in Red Fort, New Delhi, an officer is seen adjusting the headdress of a military personell. The frame adds a humorous touch to a rather stoic ceremony.

Tashi Tobgyal,
The Indian Express



Medical Empowerment

Pushpa Jamunkar, medically trained by the NGO Mahan, performs a checkup on a child while his mother looks on. Photographed in Melghat, Maharashtra, the scene is a stark representation of the state of healthcare in the country. The sensitive portrayal of the moment sheds lights on the matter.

Hemant Padalkar,
DNA

Hemant Padalkar,
DNA

Childhood Shenanigans

Students of Sarvarkheda Zilla Parishad, Melghat, Maharashtra, spend their time playing games instead of attending classes. The symmetry created by the children engaged in the activity adds a unique perspective to the image.

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PHOTO FEATURE



Anuar Patjane Floriuk is a Mexico-based photographer and anthropologist, currently focused on underwater photography and the conservation and protection of highly vulnerable underwater habitats around the world. He is the winner of the National Geographic Traveler Photo Contest 2015. You can view his other work on his website www.anuarpatjane.com

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Denizens of the Deep

Anuar Patjane Floriuk conveys his immense love for the ocean by giving us a glimpse of the rich and abundant life that thrives in its depth.

When I was 17 years old, my mother, a marine biologist and diver herself, suggested that I learn diving. Soon after, I was hooked. But it was on a trip to the Galápagos Islands, a few years ago, that I used an underwater housing for my compact camera, and discovered the possibilities of underwater photography.

When I dive into the ocean, all the chaos from the world above slowly melts away, and in place of it, is the soft, soothing humming of the water. So even if I have to return home with no images, I don't feel like I have wasted my time. The fact that I have yet again had the chance to experience something sublime, is a feeling that is irreplaceable. ▶



My friends and I decided to take a trip to Roca Partida, a small island in Mexico. While we were underwater, we encountered a Humpback Whale and her calf. All of a sudden, she decided to swim towards the divers and that's when I made the photograph. The congregation of the divers and the whale, reminded me of a 'mammal party'.



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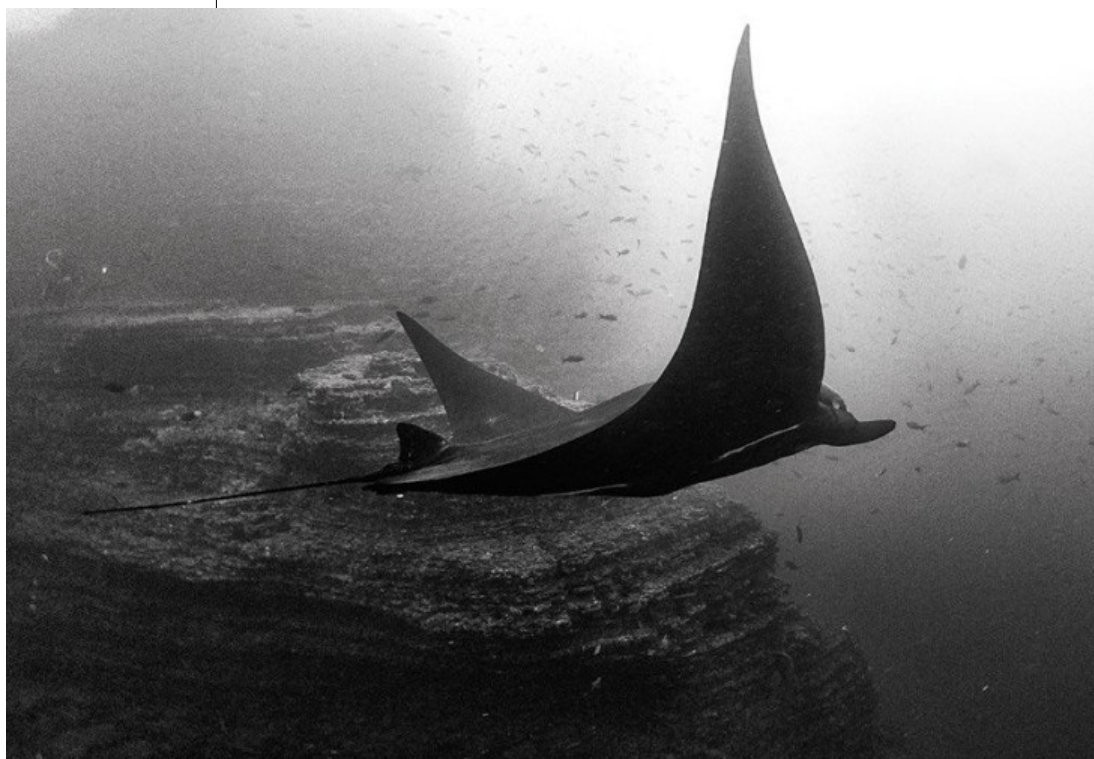
📍 **The Manta Rays, near Socorro Island in Mexico, like to approach divers. Geologists believe that they enjoy the bubbles hitting their bellies.**

My pictures are not only a depiction of my love for the deep blue. I also want to make people aware of the rich marine life that they're robbing the ocean of. I think it's easier to care when we see the effects of

deforestation. But since we cannot view the ocean's habitat, it becomes hard to fathom and gauge how our consumption is affecting its ecosystem. We need to change this.

—As told to *Conchita Fernandes*

📍 **The image of the Bootnose Dolphins was photographed near Clipperton Island in the Pacific Ocean, without the use of any diving equipment. As soon as I just saw the dolphins playing around the boat, I jumped into the water and held my breath for a few moments, till I got the shot.**



My diving gear is usually packed and ready. However, if I am traveling to a remote location like Antarctica, I not only have to train for the extremely cold weather, but I also need to reassess my camera gear.



📸 I think the shark was attracted to the light reflected on the dome of my wide angle lens. He was just a few centimeters away from my camera.

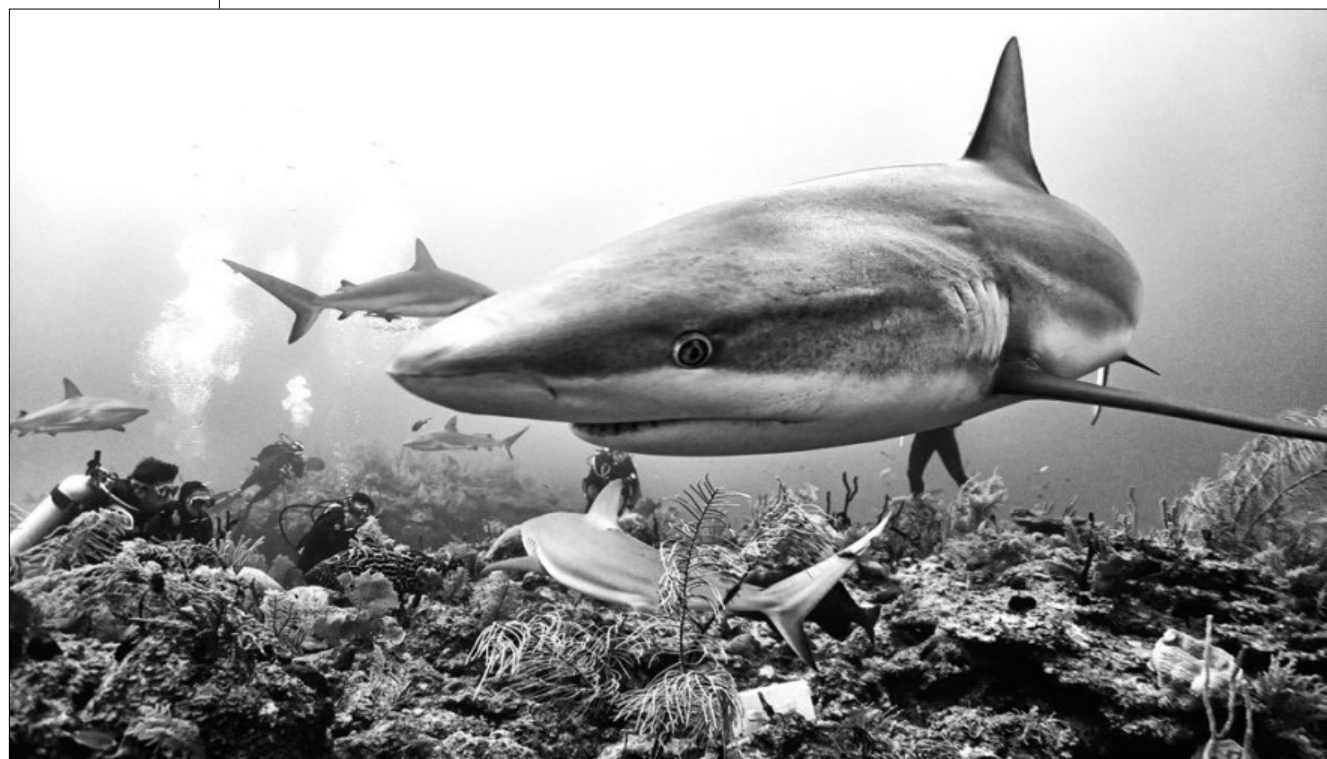
Simple Tips for Making Underwater Photographs

- Underwater photography is an extension to land photography. The same rules apply, and the same can be broken.
- I have been often criticised for diving too close to the whales. I think we misjudge animals and their

need to be left alone. It's only with experience that we learn that they don't mind our company, as long as we're empathetic to the surroundings and wait for a long time, for them to get used to our presence.

📸 I shot this photograph of the Silky Sharks at the Jardines de la Reina archipelago in Cuba. They were quite attracted to the sound of the boat.

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Your Pictures

This month through the theme 'Festivals' we challenged our readers to photograph the various festivals that are celebrated all over the country.

Winner



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Wireless eTTL/ITTL Transceiver

High Speed Sync
1/8000s
eTTL/eTTL Flash
2.4G Wireless Transceiver



LED Video Light LED-D600

Brightness Adjustment
Battery Power Test
16:9 Wide Screen



Infrared Remote
to Control Functions
of Video Light



Flash Speedlite DFL-1000T

58 ISO 100
Lithium Battery
TTL For Canon / Nikon



LCD Monitor DLM-007

7" inch
Clip-On
Pan & Tilt
Function
HDMI Input & Output
with 4K Jacks
& 4K Input
For DSLR
& Video
Camera's
2.4G Wireless
Transceiver
& Sync



Participate in the
'Your Pictures Contest' on
betterphotography.in/contests
to win a chance to be
featured in the magazine and
win exciting prizes!

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📍 When the Whole World Mourns

Ishaan Kumar, Lucknow

"I made this photograph during the Ramadan festival, where the Shia community carry the coffin of martyr Hazrat Ali for burying at Karbala, Lucknow. Hundreds of mourners gather to pay their respects and try and touch the coffin. I used a wide angle lens to include as much of the scene as possible."

Camera: Nikon D3100
Lens: Nikkor AF-S DX
10-24mm f/3.5-4.5G ED
Aperture: f/3.5
Shutterspeed: 1/50sec
ISO: 3200

Honourable Mention



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➤ The Aarti**Dipayan Bose, Kolkata**

"I made this photo at Dashashwamedh Ghat in Benaras on the occasion of Vasant Panchami. I isolated the priest as he performed the Ganga aarti, as I felt that it made for a more impactful representation. The lightbulb in the background almost adds an ethereal feel to the frame."

Camera: Nikon D7000**Lens:** Nikkor AF-S DX 18-140mm f/3.5-5.6G ED VR**Aperture:** f/4**Shutterspeed:** 1/100sec**ISO:** 2500

Honourable Mention

➔ Aggressive Kali

Vishal Rajendiran,
Puducherry

"This image was made during the Dussera festival at Kulasekarapattinam, where devotees transform themselves to Goddess Kali and collect offerings for Goddess Mutharamman. I wanted to capture the electrifying environment created by the devotees."

Camera: Nikon D7000

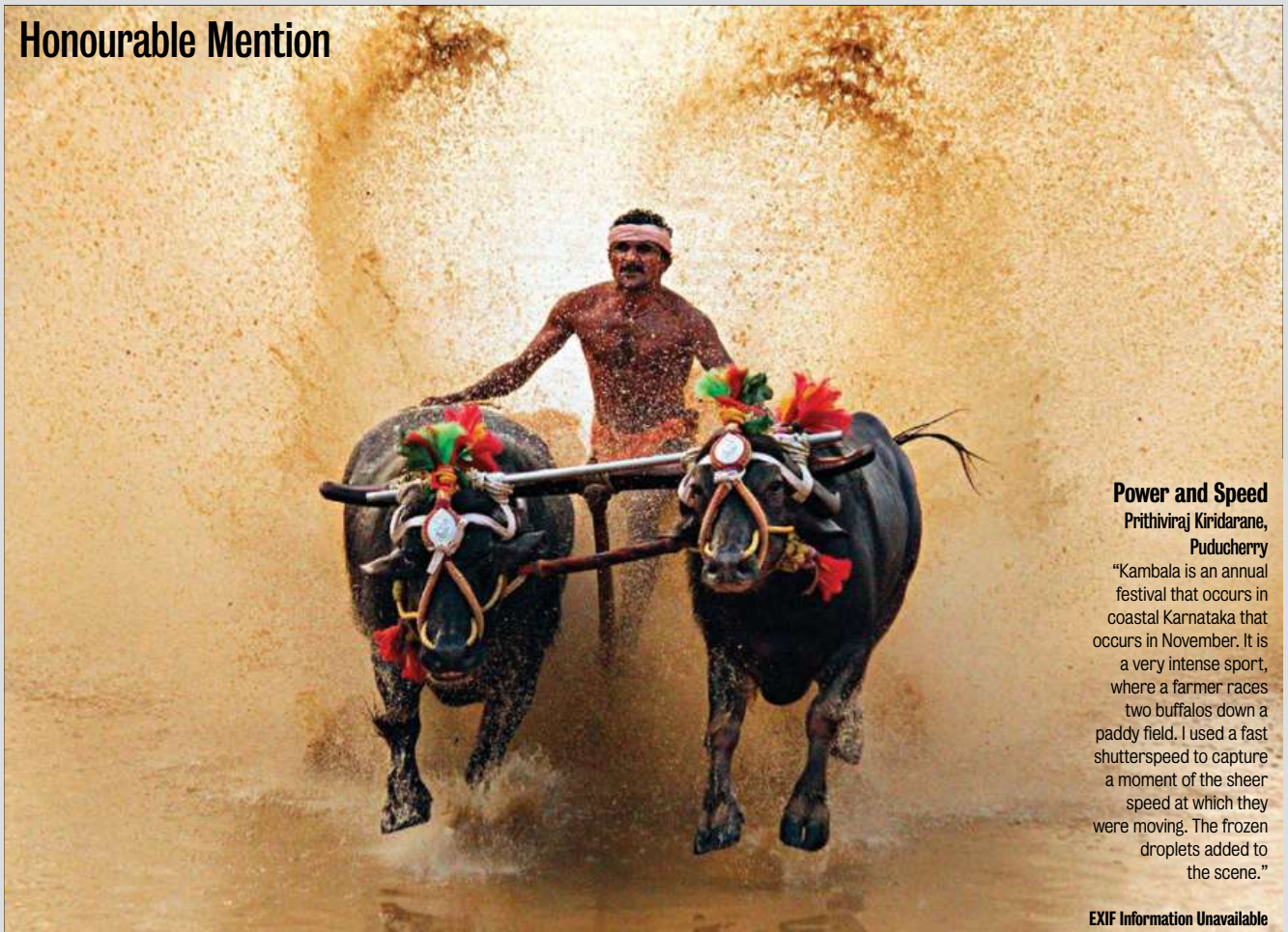
Lens: Nikkor AF 50mm
f/1.8D

Aperture: f/1.8

Shutterspeed: 1/8000sec
ISO: 800



Honourable Mention



Power and Speed

Prithiviraj Kiridarane,
Puducherry

"Kambala is an annual festival that occurs in coastal Karnataka that occurs in November. It is a very intense sport, where a farmer races two buffalos down a paddy field. I used a fast shutterspeed to capture a moment of the sheer speed at which they were moving. The frozen droplets added to the scene."

EXIF Information Unavailable



Photograph by
Angelo Cozzi/
Mondadori
Image Source
Getty Images

Solidarity in Defiance

Tommie Smith and John Carlos were photographed delivering the famous Black Power Salute at the awards ceremony of the 200m race at the 1968 Mexico Olympics. The United States athletes raised clenched, black-gloved fists and bowed their heads as their national anthem was being played, protesting racial segregation in South Africa, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and the US.

Australian sprinter Peter Norman stood in solidarity with their shared cause. Smith and Carlos wore black socks without shoes, and black scarves around their necks. According to them, the former symbolised poverty, while the latter was in remembrance of victims of racially motivated lynchings.

The athletes had refused to receive their medals from Avery Brundage, the then president of the International Olympic Committee. Brundage had earlier faced allegations of Nazi appeasement at the 1936 Berlin Olympics, over the controversial exclusion of two Jewish athletes from the US contingent and one from the German contingent. He dubbed the protest a 'nasty demonstration against the American flag by negroes', and threatened the United States Olympic Committee with expulsion if action wasn't initiated.

The USOC expelled both the athletes from the Games for their 'untypical exhibitionism', and banned them for life. Peter Norman returned to an overwhelming wave of criticism and isolation from the Australian public and media, never to return to the Olympics. The media was scathing in its criticism of the athletes' activism. *TIME* magazine in particular condemned the 'public display of petulance' by 'two disaffected black athletes'.

The timing of the demonstration was significant—civil rights activist Martin Luther King Jr had been assassinated earlier that year; South Africa had been excluded from the Olympics for its insistence on having separate committees nominate athletes from different races to the national contingent. Smith later stated in his autobiography that their gesture was not a 'Black Power Salute' (as the media called it), but a 'human rights salute'.

DID YOU KNOW?



Angelo Cozzi/Mondadori

To cover up the matter, the USOC omitted all photographic evidence of the protest from its official report. The media backlash that ensued, however, etched the image into public memory.